

THE CONGREGATIONAL MAGAZINE.

OCTOBER, 1838.

THE HEAD OF THE CHURCH, HEAD OVER ALL THINGS;

ILLUSTRATED BY

ANALOGIES BETWEEN NATURE, PROVIDENCE, AND GRACE.

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* Reprinted from the Thirtieth Number of *The American Biblical Repository*,
April, 1838.

THE Head of the *church* is likewise "head over *all* things"—sovereign alike in the kingdom of nature, the kingdom of providence, and the kingdom of grace. He is "*God over all*"—the God of nature, of providence, and of grace. This is evidently a doctrine of *revelation*, directly asserted in many passages,* and clearly implied in the whole tenor of Scripture.

It is my present design to show, that *reason* teaches the same doctrine—that a rational and candid examination and comparison of the kingdoms of nature, providence, and grace will lead us to the conclusion, that they have the same head. My arguments will be drawn from *Analogy*, "that powerful engine, which," as has been well said, "in the mind of a Newton, discovered to us the laws of all *other* worlds, and in that of Columbus, put us in full possession of our own;" and which, it might have been added, in the mind of a Butler, disclosed to us the indissoluble ties, that pervade the economy of the natural and the spiritual worlds. The analogies which run through nature, providence, and grace, are such, as if not to establish the proposition, yet to create a strong presumption, that they have the same head, and are in fact but different provinces of the same empire—distinct departments of the same government.

The *principle* involved in this argument is so fully elucidated and so powerfully enforced by Butler in his "*Analogy*," as to be familiar to the memory, and convincing to the judgment of every reader of that important work. He has left little for those, who come after

* Eph. i. 22. Rom. ix. 5.

him, to do, but to gather new *instances* of analogy and thus furnish fresh *illustrations* of the principle and additional confirmations of the argument. This field of investigation, which Butler merely *opened* to our view, is as boundless as the universe; its treasures and wonders will be exhausted only when the plan of God's universal government is fully developed and perfectly understood. Into this field my readers are now invited, with the promise, that if they discover nothing *new*, they shall see something that cannot fail to be *interesting* to the admiring student of the divine works.

1. The first analogy, which I shall mention, respects the *qualifications* for *entering into* the kingdoms, whether to explore or to enjoy them. In all these alike, the qualifications are *humility* and *faith*.

Without a humble and modest spirit, we are unprepared to investigate the question before us. On the outermost walls and gates of each of the kingdoms, which we are about to examine and compare, on every side is inscribed the motto: "Let no man enter here, save in the garb of humility." Bacon was the first to discover and apply this analogy. "The kingdom of men founded in science," he says, "is like the kingdom of heaven; no man can enter into it, except in the character of a little child." A child-like humility and docility was the key by which he opened the vestibule of nature, and in his "Novum Organum," he committed the same key into the hands of subsequent philosophers and commended it to them, as alone capable of unlocking every chamber and cloister in the spacious temple. It need scarcely be remarked that the same key is necessary and adequate to unlock the mysteries of *providence* and of *revelation*.

The book of nature, the book of providence, and the book of grace are severally *dedicated to children*. None but those who have the simplicity and docility, the humble and inquiring disposition of little children are permitted to read them. If others make the attempt, they cannot understand, still less relish their contents.

Without a figure, they who would *study* the system of nature, providence or grace, must come disposed and prepared not to *determine* how things *should* be, but to *inquire* how things *are*; not to dogmatize and dictate, but to learn and obey; not to reason *a priori*, but to observe and infer. And they who would *live happily* under either system, must have a contented and submissive spirit, and wear the apparel of humility and modesty.

Faith in its *essential elements* sustains a relation to each of the three kingdoms akin to that which humility sustains. It is the *passport for admission*. Not a step can be taken in the study of nature or the observation of Providence, any more than in the knowledge of revelation, without a belief in the divine veracity—in other words a belief that God will fulfil his tacit promise by maintaining a uniformity in his laws and plans of operation. It confers the right of *citizenship*. No man can be a useful or happy citizen in the kingdom of nature, providence, or grace, without combining with the *intellectual belief* just mentioned, a *heartfelt confidence*

in the power, wisdom, and goodness of the supreme Ruler of the universe.

Hence it is that true science and true religion mutually aid each other. Pure christianity begets the confiding modesty yet eager hope of the philosopher; and sound philosophy fosters the humility and faith of the Christian. The philosopher believes any thing with evidence, nothing without; and so does the Christian. The Christian feels himself to be merely a humble inquirer at the oracles of God, with no authority to dictate, no power to control; and so does the philosopher. The proud and dogmatizing spirit of the old Greek philosophers was not more unchristian than it was unphilosophical; accordingly their knowledge of nature and providence was as crude as their notions of religion. The same spirit as exhibited by the modern schools of *a priori* reasoning is not more unphilosophical than it is unchristian; accordingly, while most philosophers of the observing school have been believers in revelation, scepticism has made sad havoc among those of the school of reasoners *a priori*. The humble, inquiring, and believing philosophy of Socrates made him almost a Christian *without* a revelation. The proud, dictating, and dogmatizing philosophy of the German Neologist makes him an infidel *in spite* of revelation. We know not, whether the modesty of Newton partakes more largely of true religion or of sound philosophy. We know that Voltaire in his arrogance and conceit was neither a philosopher nor a Christian. The *humble believer*,—he it is in every age, that discovers the truths, beholds the wonders, and enjoys the blessings of nature, providence, and grace—he alone possesses the clue that will conduct him through the labyrinth of the divine works. To return to the figure, with which this head was introduced, humility and faith, not exactly in their christian forms, but in their essential elements, are the passports for admission, and the qualifications for citizenship alike in the kingdom of nature, the kingdom of providence, and the kingdom of grace. This analogy, so interesting in itself, it was peculiarly appropriate and important, that we should notice at the commencement of our inquiries. But we must not linger about the walls; let us enter the kingdoms in the spirit of humble and believing inquirers, and we shall find secondly, that

2. They are all governed by *general laws*. This is a characteristic feature of the divine government. Human governments *multiply* statutes, and strive, but strive in vain, to enact an express law for every specific case. Each day gives birth to an unforeseen emergency, and calls for a new enactment. With the increase of population and national prosperity, the difficulty of legislation increases, till the uninterrupted exercise of legislative wisdom is insufficient to provide for the ever varying interests and relations of the people.

Suppose now some lawgiver should arise, who could comprise every specific right and duty, and interest and relation in one simple comprehensive law. How would he throw into the shade the far-famed lawgivers of antiquity, and the boasting legislators of the present day! But Lycurgus and Solon may rest in peace in their

glory; and our representatives in the legislative hall need indulge no fear of being superseded in their functions and prerogatives. Such a legislator never has arisen and never will appear.

Yet it is by such laws that the kingdoms of nature, providence, and grace are governed. Take for examples the law of gravitation, the law of society, and the law of love.

The first regulates the relations and movements of every world and every atom in the *material* universe. The falling pebble and the rising mote, the descending rain and the ascending fog, the revolving planet, the eccentric comet and the central sun are alike subject to its sway.

The second regulates the relations and movements of every individual in *society*. Not a human being but feels the power of the social principle attracting him towards other human beings. None are so high as to be independent of the principle; none so low as to escape its all-pervading influence.

In like manner, the third regulates the relations and movements of every *Christian* in the *church*. However different their denominations, and forms, and ceremonies, however diverse their rank or talent, or dress, or deportment may be, just so far as they are Christians, all their thoughts and feelings, and words and actions are controlled by one general law—the law of love. Thus the material, the social, the spiritual universe each has one general law, all-pervading, all-controlling, and all-comprehensive.

And these laws bear a mutual analogy not only in their *universality*, but in their *nature*. They are all laws of *attraction*, of *association*, of *union*. There is a bond of society and of holy brotherhood in the natural as well as the moral world. It requires no very lively imagination to see in the planet and its satellites the emblem of a harmonious and happy family; in the solar system, a larger circle of affectionate friends and neighbours; in those groups of solar systems which revolve perhaps about some common centre, so many well regulated and well governed nations; and in the universe of worlds all circling around the central throne of God, a counterpart of what the human race would be, did they but yield as perfect obedience to the law of their social and moral nature as the heavenly bodies render to the law of gravitation. On the other hand, what is holy love but a principle of attraction, a law of gravitation in the spiritual world, which unites individual Christians into particular churches, particular churches into the church universal, the church on earth to the spirits of the just made perfect in heaven, the whole general assembly and church of the first-born, to the innumerable company of the angels, and all holy beings fast to the throne of the Most High!

Knit like the *social stars* in love,
Fair as the *moon* and clear
As yonder *sun* enthroned above,
Christians through life appear.

And in the future life, when the repelling and disturbing power of selfishness will be annihilated, oh, how strong will be the bond,

how exquisite the harmony, how beautiful and blissful the union and sympathy, that pervades the church triumphant—the holy universe!

3. The laws in each kingdom are *self-executing*. This is another *characteristic* analogy, which pervades the various departments of the divine government.

In human governments, it is usually quite as difficult to *execute* the laws as to *make* them. The executive does not always understand them, sometimes wilfully misinterprets or fails to execute them; and even when the agents of the government are well disposed and efficient men, they are utterly incapable either of securing perfect obedience to the laws, or of punishing every instance of disobedience. The man who should devise a code of laws, that would execute themselves, would be an unrivalled benefactor to his species, and would acquire for himself an imperishable renown.

Such now are the laws of nature, providence and grace. They are inwrought into the very constitution, stamped on the forehead, graven upon the heart of the subject. "I will put my law in their *inward parts* and write it upon their *hearts*." Such is the decree of heaven promulgated in relation to the kingdom of grace, and the realms of nature and providence are governed according to the same decree. Every subject yields obedience to the law from the necessity of his nature, or if in the exercise of free-agency, he disobeys, he cannot help the self-infliction of the penalty. Every man must obey the laws of his *physical* nature, or injure his health and shorten or destroy his life. He must obey the laws of his *social* nature, or torture himself, while he wrongs and provokes others. He must obey the laws of his moral and spiritual being, or conscience condemns and passion rages and consumes the offender.

Take the laws already specified, the law of gravitation, the law of society and the law of love. Obedience to each secures order and harmony, safety, and beauty. Disobedience is *immediately* and *inevitably* followed by disorder, confusion, and ruin. "The wreck of matter and the crush of worlds," which would attend a suspension of the law of attraction, is but a type of the jarring and collision of fiercer elements and the wreck and ruin of dearer interests, which are consequent upon a suspension of the social principle and the law of love. While on the other hand, the harmonious and beautiful order of the material universe as it is, is an emblem fit of the harmony, peace, and happiness, that would pervade the spiritual world on condition of perfect obedience to the law of social reciprocity and universal benevolence.

"There's not an orb, which thou behold'st
But in his motion, like an *angel sings*
Still quiring to the young-eyed cherubims:
Such harmony is in immortal souls,
But while this muddy vesture of decay
Doth grossly close it in, we cannot hear it."

4. There is a striking analogy in the *degree* and *manner* of *sovereignty* exercised in each of the kingdoms.

Does God make one creature an animalcule to float in the minutest drop of spray, and another great whale to traverse the boundless ocean; one a reptile to crawl in the dust, another a lion to roam the monarch of the forest, and a third an eagle to soar above the clouds; the zoophyte scarcely to be distinguished from the senseless plant, and man to bear the image of his Maker, and exercise in part the sovereignty of the universal Lord—without consulting at all the wishes of his creatures?

In like manner, his providence has cast one man's lot in the wilderness a wandering savage, and another's in the city amid luxury and refinement; has exalted one to sit king on a throne, and doomed another to toil a slave in the mines, has taught one to range the universe, "borne on thought's most rapid wing," and left another to confine his views to his native valley and his necessities to the supply of his bodily wants—and he has done all this without consulting the preference of the individuals concerned.

That a similar sovereignty is exercised in the kingdom of grace, need scarcely be stated, for it forms a standing objection to the administration of that realm. There too "it is not of him that *willeth* nor of him that *runneth*, but of God, that *showeth* mercy." The angels sin, and are all thrust down to the realms of darkness and despair. Man rebels, and an atonement is provided for his salvation. Yet only a part of mankind are destined to obtain eternal life, while the remainder are left to perish in their sins. Some are born to live and die heathen, while a christian birthright and inheritance fall to the lot of others.

There is no democracy, no levelling, no fear of distinctions in any part of God's government; and it is most unreasonable and inconsistent, that they, who have always recognized the exercise of absolute sovereignty in some parts of his government should be surprised to discover the same sovereignty in other parts, and that they, who find no fault with the principle in nature and providence, should consider the same principle an insuperable objection to the administration of divine grace.

There is an analogy also as to the manner in which, or the *principle* on which the sovereignty is exercised. "I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth," says Christ, "that thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes—even so, Father, for so it seemed good in thy sight." In like manner Paul says, in relation to his own times. "Ye see your calling, brethren, how that not many wise men after the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble are called, but God hath chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise, and God hath chosen the weak things of the world to confound the mighty, and base things of the world and things which are despised hath he chosen, yea, and things which are not, to bring to nought things which are."

The great principle involved in both these passages is, that the heirs of earthly good are not usually chosen to inherit spiritual blessings. And it is a principle, which pervades every department of God's government, that he seldom lavishes all his favours upon

the same individuals. The treasures of nature, of providence, and of grace, are all infinite, yet they are *meted out* with a sparing and a discriminating hand.

How liberal has *nature* been in the *provision* of her gifts, yet how parsimonious in the *distribution* of them! The sum total is beyond calculation, the dividend is usually small. Through the whole range of animals, how rarely are strength and agility combined, beauty and melody blended, cunning and courage united! The gaudy plumage of the peacock and the sweet voice of the nightingale never meet. The strength and ferocity of the lion do not co-exist with the cunning of the fox or the reason of man.

So Providence rarely allots learning to the king or rank to the scholar. He takes health and peace away from both, and makes them the portion of the obscure and illiterate peasant. The healthy are not usually the wealthy, nor the wealthy the wise. Solomon stands almost alone as at once the greatest, the richest, and the wisest man in his kingdom. God has given to *tropical climes* beauty and fertility, but he has also given them the tempest and the tornado. He has doomed the inhabitants of temperate climes and mountainous regions to toil and fatigue, but he has rewarded them by "health, peace, and competence," and in like manner *Grace* has made exhaustless provision for our spiritual wants. Heaven was emptied of its choicest treasure and brightest glory to procure gifts for men, yet these gifts are not lavished upon those who have already full hands and surfeited hearts. The Gospel was committed, not to the Literati at Rome, nor the Rabbis at Jerusalem, but to the fishermen of Galilee. It was preached unto the poor, and embraced by the humble and unlearned. It is the poor and hungry, the weeping and mourning, the despised and persecuted that inherit the christian beatitudes. If you would find the abodes of virtue and piety, you must go, not where

——— the spicy breezes
Blow soft o'er Ceylon's isle,
And every prospect pleases
And only man is vile;

but to New England's rock-bound coast, and Iceland's frozen shores, the rugged mountains of Scotland, or the inaccessible fastnesses of the high Alps.

5. There is the same necessity for *active exertion* in each of the three kingdoms. Divine Sovereignty and human agency run parallel through nature, providence, and grace. It is the law of the kingdom of grace. "Work out your *own* salvation with fear and trembling, for it is *God* who worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure." It is the law of providence, "God helps those, that help themselves," and the law of nature, "The *sun-shine* and the *plough* cover the valleys over with corn." "The blessing of the Lord, it *maketh* rich," naturally, intellectually, spiritually rich, but not without "the hand of the diligent."

He, who would *explore the mysteries* of nature, providence, and grace, must *study hard*; and he must *labour hard*, who would

secure and enjoy their *blessings*. In the sweat of his face man eats his bread. *This* life gives us nothing without great labour,* and strait is the gate and narrow the way that leads to life everlasting. We must agonize to enter the kingdoms of nature and providence as well as the kingdom of grace—all alike suffer violence and the violent take them by force.

The divine agency may be more or less secret and inscrutable, and we may not be able to discern the connection between the *means* required of *man* and the end to be accomplished, yet both are absolutely essential to the accomplishment of the end. We cannot discover the manner of divine and human co-operation, yet is it an obvious fact, that without that co-operation, we can put forth no successful effort of body, mind, or heart; transact no important business in the natural or the spiritual world; secure no valuable interest for time or eternity. The Creator's efficiency and the creature's responsibility, absolute dependance and entire free agency, run parallel throughout the natural and the moral universe.

(To be continued.)

ON THE DIFFICULTIES IN THE HISTORY OF DAVID'S INTRODUCTION TO SAUL.

THE particular providence of God as exhibited in the history of David, has always been a favourite subject of contemplation with the Christian. It is therefore of peculiar importance that the facts of his history should be ascertained. David was to be brought out of obscurity and seated on the throne of Israel. This, however, was not to be accomplished, as in the case of Saul, by Samuel's employing in his favour the great influence which he still retained over the people, nor was it to be effected by the *immediate* interference of God in his behalf. When Israel anointed Saul, he "kissed him and said, Is it not because the Lord hath anointed thee to be captain over his inheritance?" but it does not appear that when he anointed David, he accompanied the pouring out of the oil with any such declaration. To Saul he gave *signs that were to come unto him*, and directions with respect to the course he was to pursue, and a promise of his future advice;† but to David, as far as we learn from the history, he gave no such foretokens of encouragement and assistance. Nor does the conduct of David, or his brethren, or Jesse, betray any knowledge of the future destiny of the shepherd boy. From these considerations I think it may fairly be inferred, that the fear which Samuel had expressed that if Saul should hear of his anointing David, he would kill him,‡ deterred him from avowing the object of the ceremony. The prophet anoints him in silence,

* Τῶν γὰρ ὄντων ἀγαθῶν καὶ καλῶν οὐδὲν ἄνευ πόνου καὶ ἐπιμελείας θεοῦ εὐδοκῶσιν ἀνθρώποις. Xenophon, Memorabilia. II. 1: 28.

Nil sine magno

Vita labore dedit mortalibus.—Horace Sat. 9. Lib. I.

† 1 Sam. x.

‡ 1 Sam. xvi. 2.

and then leaves him to return to the care of his father's sheep. "The Spirit of the Lord then came upon David," and under its guidance he is left to work his own way to the accomplishment of the divine purpose. An opportunity must, therefore, be presented to him of emerging from the obscurity in which it appears his family were involved. Now, what was the opportunity provided? What was the first link of that chain of providential circumstances which raised David "from the sheepcote, from following the sheep, to be ruler over God's people, over Israel?" This is surely an interesting question.

In the sixteenth chapter of the first book of Samuel, from the 18th to the 22d verse, we have an account of David's introduction to Saul as a musician, and we are told that "Saul loved him greatly, and he became his armour-bearer. And Saul went to Jesse, saying, let David, I pray thee, stand before me, for he hath found favour in my sight." But in the next chapter (ver. 55 and 56) we read that "when Saul saw David go forth against the Philistine, he said unto Abner, whose son is this youth? And Abner said, As thy soul liveth, I cannot tell. And the king said, enquire thou whose son the stripling is."* This inconsistency has induced Bishops Hall, Warburton, and Horsley to "suppose that the encounter with Goliath took place before David was required to play the harp before Saul." "It appears," says the last of these writers, "from many circumstances of the story, that David's combat with Goliath was many years prior in order of time to Saul's madness, and to David's introduction to him as a musician. Now, the just conclusion from these circumstances is, not that these twenty verses (from 32 to 51 inclusive, chap. xvii.) are an interpolation, but that the last ten verses of the preceding chapter, are misplaced. The true place for these ten verses seems to be between the 9th and 10th of the 18th chapter. Let these ten verses be removed to that place, and this 17th chapter be connected immediately with the 13th verse of chapter xvi. and the whole disorder and inconsistency that appears in the narrative in its present arrangement, will be removed." Townshend has adopted this arrangement; but he acknowledges in his Introduction, that there are "very difficult passages," and that "he has been guided by the authority of Bishop Horsley, who seems to have considered the subject with much attention," and therefore "he has relied with confidence on his decision."

It will be found, however, that when we have thus removed the account of David's introduction to Saul as a musician, in order to do away with the inconsistency of Saul's asking who he is, and of Abner's appearing ignorant respecting him, after he had dwelt with Saul and been his armour-bearer, the narrative will exhibit other inconsistencies of equal importance. A young man whom Saul himself had armed for the occasion, and sent forth to fight with Goliath; respecting whom Saul had so anxiously enquired, "Whose son is this youth?" whom "as he returned from the slaughter of the Philistine, Abner brought before Saul:" whom Saul asked, "Whose son art thou?" who answered Saul, "I am the son of Jesse, the Bethle-

* He speaks of him as an entire stranger. Townshend's Arrangement *in loco*.

hemite;" whom "Saul took that day, and would not let him go no more home to his father's house;" who "went out whithersoever Saul sent him;" whom "Saul set over the men of war;" who "was accepted in the sight of all the people; of whom the women, coming out of *all the cities of Israel*, sang, "David hath slain his ten thousands;" whom "Saul eyed from that day and forward" with jealousy, and of whom he said, "What can he have more but the kingdom?" This same young man, within the period of three years, is spoken of to Saul as a perfect stranger, and described to him in terms which imply the supposition, that Saul had never heard of him—terms, it will be found, which imply a belief on the part of the speaker, that the name of this young man's father did not, and that the young man's own name would not, convey to Saul any idea of either his person or character: "Then answered one of the servants and said, behold *I have seen a son of Jesse*, the Bethlehemite, that is cunning in playing, and a mighty valiant man, and a man of war, and prudent in matters, and a comely person, and the Lord is with him." If David had killed Goliath; if Saul had set him over the men of war, and if Saul had eyed him with jealousy on account of his great popularity, would Saul's servant have thought of informing him that this son of Jesse, the Bethlehemite, was a mighty valiant man, and a man of war? If David in going "out whithersoever Saul sent him," had "behaved himself wisely," so that "he was accepted in the sight of all the people," is it probable that one of Saul's servants would have told him that David was a man prudent in matters? If David had been obliged to retire from court on account of the jealousy excited in the mind of Saul, (*vide* Townshend, note, *in loco*,) is it reasonable to suppose that one of Saul's servants would have ventured to speak of him to Saul in terms of unqualified commendation, and moreover to declare that "the Lord was with him?"—a declaration which could not have failed to re-kindle the jealousy of Saul, and to destroy his confidence in the servant who, under such circumstances, should have dared to utter it. If David had been a public character, "set over the men of war," and had been employed to go whithersoever Saul sent him, why did Saul's servant inform him that he was a *comely person*, as if Saul had never seen him?

When "David came to Saul, and stood before him, he loved him greatly, and he became his armour-bearer," (chap. xvi. ver. 21.) Here Saul seems to have been struck with David, as if he had not seen him before; but, according to the arrangement, he had dwelt in his palace, (chap. xviii. ver. 2 and 5.)

When Saul sent to Jesse for David to play to him, his message was, "send me David, thy son, which is with the sheep." He here describes David by a circumstance which does not imply any previous knowledge of him, and a circumstance, too, of which Saul himself could have no personal knowledge, and which must have been told him by some one, probably by the servant who recommended David as a musician. Is this natural; if David had killed Goliath, if Saul had, in consequence, retained him at court, and set him over the men of war, would he not rather have said, *David who*

conquered Goliath, or, who was with me before, or, whom I set over the men of war?

"And the women answered one another, &c. And Saul was very wrath, and the saying displeased him; and he said, they have ascribed unto David ten thousands, and to me they have ascribed but thousands; and what can he have more but the kingdom?" Now Mr. Townshend allows only three years from the victory over Goliath to the marriage, and he supports this opinion by an important consideration. Within three years,* therefore, from the time when Saul was thus excited to jealousy by the popularity of David, and said, "What can he have more but the kingdom?" this new arrangement makes it appear as if Saul sent for David, while quietly tending his father's sheep, and again placed him in a situation to ingratiate himself at court and with the people; that he assigned him "a post of confidence and affection;"† and on this showing we are under the necessity of believing, that within the short time from the occasion on which, we are told, "Saul eyed David from that day and forward," he ceased to regard him with any sentiment of jealousy, for as soon as he "stood before him, he loved him greatly."

Such, I think, it will be found are the principal features of the inconsistency which the new arrangement involves; an inconsistency, it should be observed, of the same nature as that which it proposed to obviate. Although the events seem to be incompatible, I shall, in another paper, endeavour satisfactorily to account for the inconsistency, which must be regarded as extremely desirable.

M. F.

ON THE INEFFICACY OF SUBSCRIPTION TO ARTICLES OF FAITH, IN REPLY TO THE DEAN OF PETERBOROUGH.

(To the Editor.)

SIR,—A small book some time since fell into my hands, written by Dr. Turton, Regius Professor of Divinity in the University of Cambridge, which I read with some curiosity, and greater surprise. As this work materially involves one of our nonconforming Aca-

* The period must, in fact, have been much shorter; for some time must have elapsed while "David took the harp, and played with his hand," (chap. xvi. ver. 23.) before "Saul removed him from him, and made him his captain over a thousand," (chap. xviii. ver. 13); and again, while as "captain over a thousand, he went out and came in before the people, and behaved himself wisely in all his ways," (chap. xviii. ver. 13, 14), deducting the time necessary for these circumstances, which occurred between David's return and his marriage, from the three years between the victory and the marriage, we find that, according to Townshend's arrangement and chronology, Saul must have sent for David *very soon* after the occasion on which he was very wrath, and eyed David from that day and forward.

† Townshend, vol. i. page 644.

demical Institutions, a few strictures upon it may prove interesting to some of the readers of the *Congregational Magazine*.

It is well known to you, and to many of your readers, that about a century ago, William Coward, Esq. endowed an Institution for educating a small number of young men, seldom much exceeding twenty, for the ministry among Protestant Dissenters. By his will, Mr. Coward appointed four Trustees, to whom alone the entire management of the Institution was committed. He directed his students to be instructed in the doctrines which are contained in the Assembly's Catechism, but his will requires no subscription to any creed, nor any declaration of faith to be made, as a condition of enjoying the benefits of his bequest. It is matter of public notoriety, that during the earlier and larger part of the time which has elapsed since Mr. Coward's death, a considerable proportion of the ministers who were educated in this Institution, imbibed and taught Arian, Socinian, Unitarian, or other heterodox doctrines; and that many of the congregations among whom they settled adopted similar opinions. This was a result which Mr. Coward certainly did not intend or contemplate; and it has been cause of serious regret to many religious and excellent persons. During the later years of the existence of this Institution, a great alteration has taken place, and means have been successfully employed to render it more consonant with Mr. Coward's views.

The history of this Institution is selected by Dr. Turton, as affording a powerful argument for defending the subscriptions to the thirty-nine articles which are in use in the Universities of Oxford and Cambridge. An application was made, as will be recollected, some time since, to Parliament, to open the Universities for the admission of Dissenters into those venerable seminaries. As it was reasonable to expect, this application produced alarm in the bosoms of not a few of the learned and dignified occupants of the magnificent endowments of the Universities, and of the Established Church. To justify this alarm, by showing the mischievous consequences which must follow such a departure from the ancient methods of legislation, Dr. Turton enters the arena: and it is, I think, somewhat remarkable that no adversary of established formulas, and of imposed subscriptions, has, as far as my knowledge extends, taken up the *gauntlet*. In the absence of a fitter combatant, your readers will, perhaps, glance at a few observations of mine, on the very inconclusive logic of the learned and truly respectable Professor.

Dr. Turton constructs his argument on the basis, that though other causes operated, in some degree, to produce the injurious effects in Coward's Institution, which have been noticed, the predominant cause is to be found in the want of subscription to an established formula of orthodox doctrines, as a test to be imposed upon the candidates for admission into it. The conclusion which is drawn is, that subscription to the Thirty-nine Articles by young men, at their entrance into the Universities, supplies an impregnable defence against the intrusion of heretical opinions into those sacred retreats of learning and piety, and an effectual security for the orthodoxy of the lay and clerical members of the Established Church. In order

to establish the basis of his reasoning, Dr. Turton has taken great pains to investigate the history of Coward's Institution, in which he appears to have been very successful. It is devoutly to be wished that all the reverend and dignified assertors of the claims of the Church of England, would imitate the patience and accuracy which this well-informed and candid opponent of nonconformist principles has displayed; ignorance, prejudice, and bitter invective are not the most appropriate, though too common attributes, of the champions of ecclesiastical supremacy. I have no exception to make to the historical details which Dr. Turton has inserted into his book, nor any apology to offer for those Trustees of Coward's funds, against whom he levels very strong censure; while I am happy to concur with him in believing, that the affairs of this Institution have been for a good many years, and still are, under improved management, though no subscription is exacted from such as are desirous to avail themselves of its advantages.

The purpose I have in view is, to show that the cause which Dr. Turton assigns, as the principal reason of the defection of Coward's students is not justly chargeable with the effect which he ascribes to it; and that, as his premises are incorrect, and the conclusion which he draws is invalid, his argument for the retention of subscription in the Universities is inadequate to the purpose for which it is urged. The writer of these remarks fully concedes the right, which any donors of funds for the support of Christianity have, to employ the best methods which they can devise, for preserving their benefactions from being appropriated to the support of what they may deem to be erroneous doctrines. So far he is happy to agree with the learned Professor: the difference between us relates to what are the best methods of accomplishing this desirable purpose. Dr. Turton thinks that subscription to an established formula of belief is the very best, and indeed the only sure method of so doing. It appears to me that the evidence of *experience* to which he, at the commencement of his book, somewhat ostentatiously appeals, as the only safe criterion in such cases, is *toto celo*, adverse to his opinion; and I shall state, with the utmost brevity, the considerations which lead me to this conclusion.

I. Dr. Turton appears to admit that the heterodox opinions of the earlier Tutors and Trustees of Coward's Institution, together with the improper modes which were adopted for teaching divinity, as well as the little care that was taken to ascertain what were the religious views of the candidates for admission, or whether they had any such views, had some influence in producing the evils of which complaint has justly been made: all these concurrent circumstances, however, appear to him to be of inconsiderable moment, compared with the absence of subscription to "a form of sound words," such subscription being the learned Professor's *panacea* for every disease to which the belief of theological students is liable.

The history of the later years of Coward's Institution supplies, at least, a very probable argument, to show, that if the regulations which are now adopted in it, had been employed from its commencement, there would have been little occasion to lament the pre-

valence of heretical opinions, even though no subscription had been imposed. These regulations relate to the appointment of orthodox Trustees and Tutors; the improved modes of delivering theological instruction which have been adopted, and the pains that have been taken to prevent young men of irreligious character, and such as either hold opinions which are manifestly at variance with the will of the founder, or have no opinions at all, from being admitted as students. The result of the regulations which have been specified has abundantly shown, by the *experience* of many years, that orthodoxy may be perpetuated in a theological seminary, without having recourse to the useless and injurious expedient of a subscription to articles of faith, drawn up by fallible men, and from which, not the least, even verbal deviation can, in any case, be permitted. The writer of these remarks has the satisfaction of knowing several excellent, intelligent, and orthodox ministers, who were educated in this seminary; and he has reason to believe that there are many more of like character, who are employed in endeavouring to promote the best interests of mankind, by preaching doctrines which are in substantial agreement with the Assembly's Catechism.

The *experience* of several other Dissenting Academical Institutions, in which measures similar to those which are in use in Coward's are adopted, yields an additional proof of the little necessity there is, for what I shall not hesitate to characterize as an anti-scriptural, anti-protestant, unreasonable and entangling device. I need not remind a writer so well versed in the history of his own church as Dr. Turton, of the many instances which are upon record of most eminent churchmen who have groaned under the yoke of subscription; and have not scrupled to express their fervent wishes that they were well quit of many of the requirements which are extant in the book of Common Prayer, to the whole of which every clergyman is compelled to declare *his unfeigned assent and consent*. If the Trustees and Managers of Dissenting Academies pay an inviolable regard to the principles, for the maintenance of which they were originally appointed; if they select only such tutors as are warmly attached to those principles, and are persons of intelligence and piety; and if, without which, all other precautions will prove nugatory, due care be taken that no students be admitted but such as bring from responsible recommenders satisfactory documents of piety, and appropriate mental qualities, and are themselves able to give due replies to all reasonable enquiries that may be made; sufficiently long *experience* shows, that as much certainty will accrue of their becoming respectable and orthodox ministers, as the infirmity of human character, and the fallible discernment of men can rationally be expected to secure.

The respectable writer whose notions I controvert, makes various observations on the different plans which have, in times past, been adopted by several classes of Dissenters, for the purpose of training ministers to their own views of christian truth. On these observations I shall animadvert no further than to say, that Dissenters possess, at least, one important superiority over the adherents of the Established Church; they have the power of reviewing their own

measures, and of changing them whenever propriety may dictate a change. Not so a church, in which every thing is fixed by legislative enactment; and in the services and modes of which not an *iota* can be altered by any ecclesiastical authority, though the reasons for it may be most stringent and clear. Dr. Turton passes some strictures on the management of the Dissenting College at Highbury, and, in particular, appears to be surprised at the provisions of the trust deed, under which this Institution is carried on. He inserts in his book a considerable extract from this document, which relates to the doctrinal articles, for the maintenance of which this Institution is pledged. I am not called upon to express any opinion on this deed, but I shall notice, as not a little remarkable, Dr. Turton's observations upon it. His words are, page 109, edit. 2, "Whoever will carefully peruse the Highbury Confession of Faith, must be aware that the principal doctrines required to be held, as well by the Students as the Tutors of the Institution, are the most difficult that have ever been propounded to the human mind." I must suppose that when the learned Professor penned these words, his recollection was not present of his having subscribed the thirty-nine articles, once at least; and that no youth, of any age, can be admitted to University honours, without a similar subscription. One can scarcely suppose that Dr. Turton will seriously contend that the principal doctrines of the thirty-nine articles are less difficult than those of the Highbury Confession.

II. I shall now advert to the evidence which arises from *experience* in the case of the Universities, and of the Church of England, to prove that subscription to the articles is a very insecure defence against heresy, and that a reliance upon it is pregnant with very pernicious results. It may be allowed to me to premise that there is something wonderful in a man endued with the perspicacity of Dr. Turton, expressing himself so strongly respecting the various infirmities of Dissenters, and the ineligibility of their academical proceedings, especially in the instance of Coward's earlier Trustees, without any apparent consciousness of the facility with which his censures may be retorted upon the Guardians of the Universities, and the Governors of the Episcopal Church. It might be supposed by any one who is unacquainted with the former and present state of the Universities, and of the church, on reading Dr. Turton's remarks, that nothing is to be found in the colleges and halls of Oxford and Cambridge, but order, modesty, temperance, learning, and piety; and that in the churches of the episcopal communion the *beau ideal* of uniform belief presents itself to every observer, undeformed by any discrepant opinions, and unsullied by any touch of heretical depravation. Witnessing the mighty and benignant influence of orthodoxy, zeal, and charity, created and sustained by the magic energy of subscription, he might exclaim,

"Magnus ab integro sæclorum nascitur ordo.

Jam redit et virgo; redeunt Saturnia regna.

Jam nova progenies cælo demittitur alto."

Some slight acquaintance with the early and present states of these establishments would, however, awaken him; and in the light of

facts and experience show him that the ecstatic vision was unreal; its splendours would fade from his sight, and he would, reluctantly it may be, perceive, that there are some spots which need removal, even in the face of this "Apostolic Church."

It would be superfluous labour to engage in specific detail, for the purpose of proving that all the Trustees and Governors of the Establishments in question have not, with conscientious scrupulosity, and enlightened zeal, complied with the conditions on which endowments so splendid have been committed to their direction and enjoyment; nor has the present writer the means for tracing out, with minute exactness, the esoteric memoirs of each of these sodalities as Dr. Turton has done in the case of Coward's Institution. It was never his lot to enter into the arcana of these elevated academics, or to witness the transactions which take place in the conclaves of *heads* and professors of high degree, or even in the combination rooms of erudite Associates and Fellows, who are rejoicing in the "*otium cum dignitate*" which is guaranteed to them, by virtue of their exact conformity and fervent attachment to orthodoxy, ascertained by their subscription to the articles and creeds of ancient days.

I may, however, be permitted, with the lights which I enjoy, in common with every man who reads at all, on ecclesiastical matters, to inquire, whether the *experience* of the Church of England warrants the boast of uniformity of belief, which many, certainly not its discreetest friends, are so frequently making; and to which Dr. Turton voluntarily and warmly lends his aid, as it appears to me, with singular infelicity, and a marvellous deficiency of that exact logic, which he claims for himself, as the result of the scientific discipline of his Alma-Mater. It is somewhat unfortunate, that the articles themselves, which define the belief of all true churchmen, are, in the apprehension of numbers of the most distinguished writers by whom the Church of England has been adorned, in great need of definite elucidation. By some of these learned and acute commentators, the articles are supposed to exhibit the doctrines of Calvinism; others wish to interpret them in an Arminian sense; while not a few strenuously support a species of "*tertium quid*,"—and by the exertion of great dexterity, imagine they liberate themselves and the articles, from the many inconveniences which belong to both the extremes. The most ingenious gloss, however, which has been put on these mysterious *criteria*, is that which is patronized by a justly celebrated modern divine, whose opinion respecting them is, that they are "*articles of peace*." Like many others of the uninitiated, I should have admired the mystic appellation, without a chance of decyphering its intent, had not the illustrious patron of it condescended to inform us, that they cannot be imagined to pledge those who subscribe them to any definite opinions, inasmuch as no two men can readily be found to agree in the belief of five hundred propositions, upon the most abstruse and recondite themes; but that the subscription merely guarantees the peace of the church, by prohibiting its ministers from oppugning the doctrines which are contained in the articles. If I had not a profound respect for the

talents and labours of Archdeacon Paley, I should be strongly tempted to quote the language of the Roman Satyrst, "*Risum teneatis amici?*" As it is thus seen to be hopeless to determine, by the verdict of their subscribers, the sense of the thirty-nine articles, every man must do the best he can for himself. I have some inconsiderable knowledge of the characters and designs of the illustrious men by whose agency the church was reformed; I have attentively perused the articles many times, aided by the labours of Bishop Burnet and others, most eminent expounders of the creed of the English Church; and have satisfied myself with the sense which the knowledge of the ordinary rules of grammar enables me to deduce from them. The result is a full persuasion that they are Calvinistic, meaning by this term, not a universal agreement in all which the profound Reformer of Geneva taught, but such an agreement as justifies the conventional use of it. My opinion that such is the true and evident sense of the articles, is so strong, that I think no man can derive from them any other sense, without an extensive acquaintance with the arts of casuistry, and sophistical ratiocination. I mean no offence when I affirm, that all disinterested and competent judges will agree with me in determining that an attempt to put any other meaning on these celebrated articles is mere trifling, and indicative of a wish to stultify the understandings of men by pretences, which are too flimsy to endure the most ordinary handling.—*Vide note at the end.*

It is, then, inquired, has the test accomplished its purpose? The purpose of preserving the seats of learning from the taint of heretical opinions, and defending the church against the vehement incursion of the numerous errors which are proscribed by its articles and creeds. This it must have done, if Dr. Turton's conclusion be just. Have then, all the learned professors, all the dignified ecclesiastics, who are the boast of the universities, and the glory of the church; have all the rectors, vicars, and curates of the church, have all the noblemen, statesmen, and members of the aristocracy of England, all, in fine, the graduates and under-graduates who have put their signatures to the thirty-nine articles, continued to hold fast what Dr. Turton esteems to be "the form of sound words," unstained by Arian, Arminian, Sabellian, Unitarian, or Infidel opinions? Let the Arminian divines of the times of the Stuarts reply. Let the rational and philosophical theologians of the days of the first and second Georges, and of the earlier times of George the Third reply. Let them show us their unwavering attachment to the Calvinistic creed to which they pledged themselves. Where have the Clarkes, Waterlands, Warburtons, Middletons, Whitbys, Tomlins, and the thousand other erudite and accomplished clergymen, their contemporaries, deposited the proofs of the zeal with which they upheld the evangelical doctrines of their church, to which they were solemnly pledged? If, in place of any satisfactory answers to such interrogatories, we are referred to the present race of the clergy, it is beyond contradiction, that the great majority of them are now employing their efforts to subvert the genuine doctrines of their church, by decrying the celestial energy, by which

alone their formularies teach that sinful men can be turned "from darkness to light," and for this, are substituting the popish figments of uninterrupted succession, and of grace inherent in the sacraments, as well as the anti-christian device of baptismal regeneration; not without incessant and reiterated vituperations of those of their fellow churchmen, who are so ignorant and fanatical as to maintain the regeneration of the soul by the immediate operation of the Holy Spirit. If, I ask, this be the present condition, as it assuredly is, of great numbers of regularly authorized clergymen, subscribers of the thirty-nine articles, where is the efficacy of this test? If, in the temples episcopally consecrated for authorized instruction, and in the numberless books and tracts which are daily issuing from the press, doctrines most inimical to those of the reformers, martyrs, confessions, articles and homilies, are divulged through the land; where shall we look for the saving benefits of subscription? If clergymen, every one of whom has recognised the sanctity of these documents, at his entrance on the discharge of official engagements, and enjoyment of the rich endowments of calvinistic orthodoxy, are doing their utmost to misinterpret the charters by which they hold their possessions, and to malign the doctrines which are indelibly engraven on them,—what is the meaning of the "*crambe repetita*" of the indispensable necessity of tests, and solemn subscriptions? If in this church, whose uniformity and close adherence to the faith of primitive christians and sainted reformers, is the everlasting theme of ten thousand eulogists, there are to be found, among its highest functionaries and most eminent advocates, as well as in the inferior grades of the hierarchy, and the million of its lay and secular adherents, every variety of religious profession, from ultra-calvinism to the closest approximation to infidelity; what becomes of the vaunted defences against heresy and discrepant opinions, so often and so loudly proclaimed to be associated with forms, services, liturgies, &c., which are too sacred to endure the distant approach of correction, and too perfect to need even the smallest reform? Surely it is strange, passing strange, that such complacency as that in which Dr. Turton indulges on these themes, should be enjoyed by multitudes of men like him, acute, intelligent, learned, and in many respects most estimable!

I shall subjoin only a few words, on what appears to me to be of inexpressible moment,—the pernicious effects which result from reliance on such a mode of introducing men into the ministry of the gospel of Christ.

We may collect from the general tenor of Dr. Turton's remarks, as well as from various other sources of information, that when a candidate applies for admission into the Colleges of the Universities, his subscribing the articles supersedes any exact enquiry relative to his morals, or piety. He may know little or nothing of the purport of the engagements under which he brings himself by his subscription; but this endangers not his reception. It would indeed be unreasonable, in the highest degree, to exact such knowledge, or to suppose him to be possessed of it, since according to Dr. Turton's *Strictures on the Highbury Confession*, the articles which he sub-

scribes, relate to "doctrines the most difficult that have ever been propounded to the human mind." In the judgment of most considerate men, this would supply a reason for delay, and hesitation, as well to the "Heads of houses," as to juvenile candidates; but it seems according to collegiate discretion, to be a motive for an expeditious and summary termination of the affair, lest time and inquiry should generate scruples, injurious equally to the success of the aspirant, and the honours of the University. Ignorance of such a kind thus operates as no bar to his being permitted to subscribe; and it is a matter too notorious to demand proof, that the instances are few indeed in which any are rejected who offer themselves, for this purpose, whatever may be their literary, moral, or religious qualifications. By means of so ready an access, the colleges are replenished annually with multitudes of thoughtless youths from the public schools, and other sources, who addict themselves to the service of Christ, as a profession which offers them prospects of advancement, and emolument; while numbers of the younger members of wealthy families are, from infancy, devoted to this employment, that they may in due time, succeed to the "livings" which descend to them as a portion of their patrimony, or have been purchased, with the object of thus establishing them in a respectable and gentlemanly profession. The facility for obtaining an entrance into the Universities which is afforded by the simple, and uniform expedient of subscription, removes the difficulties which might attend a careful investigation of character, and a jealous scrutiny of the motives which induce young men to take upon themselves the "Cure of Souls;" and the well-known conduct of the majority of such candidates for "Holy Orders," subsequent to their admission, demonstrates their qualifications for the awfully responsible office which they have the temerity to undertake.

It is not my object to investigate the plans of theological instruction which are adopted in the Universities, or to criticise the literary proficiency of the majority of their alumni; but the truth is too apparent to be questioned, that if levity of character, habits of dissipation and profligacy, youthful excess, lavish expenditure of time and money, with the absence of every indication of fervent piety, except a bigoted zeal for the "Church," with a deep and growing aversion for what they learn to stigmatize as methodism and enthusiasm, be the requisite qualifications for a faithful imitation of our blessed Saviour and his Apostles, no places on earth can be found teeming with more hopeful specimens, than the Universities of England. The attempts that are made to conceal, or extenuate these evils are most futile; and serve only to demonstrate the temporising character, and secular propensities of those who make them. No words which language supplies can depict the unhappy results which have, for ages, been consequent on the adoption of the methods at which I have glanced, and which may be traced to a reliance on subscription, as a test of character, and orthodoxy. I have no purposes to serve, in thus writing, but to expose the inefficient, and unsatisfactory reasoning which Dr. Turton has employed. I avow a very high

esteem for many members of the Established Church, both lay and ecclesiastical; and a sincere respect for the candid, well-informed, and gentlemanly writer, whose lucubrations have elicited the above observations. I beg, however, to suggest in conclusion, to all such worthy, though mistaken persons, a careful revision of the discipline of their literary and ecclesiastical establishments, and an attentive meditation on "the signs of the times;" as they may be assured, that whatever becomes of individual churches, or denominations of professed Christians, every effort to impede the progress of just and liberal opinion, and of genuine, and spiritual religion, by the sturdy maintenance of shackles forged in the laboratories of priestly and political domination, and thus far perpetuated by the antiquated and worn-out machinery of tests, subscriptions, and party devices, will be found ineffectual towards restraining the march of truth and freedom, and the diffusion of that divine religion, which is destined to overthrow all the schemes of superstition, selfishness, and worldly policy, and to extend liberty, and truth, and love, to the most benighted and enslaved regions of the globe.*

I am, &c. &c.

ONE OF COWARD'S TRUSTEES.

Uxbridge Common.

* I shall solicit the attention of the readers of these pages to the following extract from Burnet's Exposition of the Articles. Vol. I. page 9. Edit. 1831.

"I come in the next place to consider what the clergy is bound to by their subscription. The meaning of every subscription is to be taken from the design of the imposer, and from the words of the subscription itself. The title of the Articles bears, that they were agreed upon in convocation, *for the avoiding of diversities of opinions, and for the stablishing consent touching true Religion.* Where it is evident, that a *consent in opinion* is intended. If we in the next place consider the declaration that the church has made in the canons, we shall find that though by the fifth canon, which relates to the whole body of the people, such are only declared to be excommunicated, *ipso facto*, who shall affirm any of the articles to be *erroneous*, or such as he may not with a good conscience subscribe to; yet the 36th canon is express for the clergy, requiring them to subscribe *willingly and ex animo; and acknowledge all and every article to be agreeable to the word of God*: upon which canon it is that the form of the subscription runs in these words, which seem expressly to declare a man's own opinion, and not a bare consent to an article of peace, or an engagement to silence and submission. The statute of 13th of Queen Elizabeth, cap. 12, which gives the legal authority to our requiring subscriptions, in order to a man's being capable of a benefice, requires that every clergyman should read the articles in the church, with a declaration of his *unfeigned assent to them*. These things make it appear very plain, that the subscriptions of the clergy must be considered as a declaration of their own opinion, and not as a bare obligation to silence."

REMINISCENCES OF AMERICA.

No. VI.—THE DUTCH REFORMED SYNOD.

I HASTENED through the New England States, in order that I might be present at a meeting of the Dutch Reformed Synod, at Albany.

In Great Britain the Tweed seems to mark the boundary of certain forms of church polity; on the one side Episcopalianism, on the other Presbyterianism being considered the orthodox mode of governing the church, while Congregationalism and Prebyterianism are the prevalent polity of the Dissenters on the corresponding sides. So in America geographical or state boundaries seem to mark out denominational bounds. In the eastern states Congregationalism prevails, whilst the middle states are considered the strong hold of the Presbyterian system. I do not recollect to have heard of a single Presbyterian church existing in New England, nor, excepting in the cities of New York and Philadelphia, of a Congregational church existing in any other than the New England States; yet both denominations seem to feel that they are one. There is a free interchange of delegates, who, I believe, speak, but do not vote at the Congregational conventions, and Presbyterian synods and assemblies; and calls to the pastoral office are frequently given by a church of one denomination to a pastor of another, which are freely accepted, it being understood that the pastor will govern the church according to the principles of the other churches with which it is connected.

There is the same fraternal interchange of delegates betwixt the Dutch Reformed Synod and the other Presbyterian and Congregational bodies; but it is seldom that the churches composing this body select pastors from any of the other denominations, or that pastors trained by them are settled over other churches. This is to be traced, I believe, solely to their attachment to their own principles. Their pulpits, however, are open to all who preach the gospel of Christ, and a considerable number of the ministers who have left Scotland, in connexion with the United Associate Synod, have been warmly received into the body of this church. On this account, and as her constitution differs considerably from the different forms of church government which are to be seen in operation in Britain, it may gratify some readers if a few pages be devoted to a brief detail of the history and order of this association of churches. With this view I have extracted the following passages from a discourse delivered by an esteemed member of that communion, the Rev. W. Bethoune, of Philadelphia, grandson of the much honoured Mrs. Isabella Grahame, of New York.

"The various religious sects of this country," says Mr. Bethoune, "with few exceptions, were brought to it by the various emigrants to its shores. The puritan pilgrims established the Congregational churches of the eastern states. The episcopal forms prevailed where the emigrants had belonged to the Established Church of the mother country, and indeed were specially encouraged by the colonial governments. The Scotch retained their attachment to that eccle-

siastical constitution for which they had suffered so much at home, and founded the Presbyterian church of the United States. The Catholics from Ireland and the continent of Europe, still cherished the superstitions of the old world amidst the liberties of the new. So did the adventurous Hollander, when in his quiet but persevering industry he sought the rich harvest of the western continent, bring with him that form of religion, and those precious doctrines he had received from his martyred fathers, and lay the foundation of the Reformed Dutch Church in this country.

"The settlements of the Dutch on the Hudson River were commenced as early as 1613, so that we may claim for our church the earliest ecclesiastical constitution in the United States. The pilgrims did not land at Plymouth until 1620, seven years after.

"As, however, an American may be said to have two countries, the land of his birth and the land of his ancestors, so must we trace the history of our church in that of the church of Holland.

"The national character of Holland has never been sufficiently appreciated. Steady virtue has not the notoriety of brilliant vice, and the pure bullion of her worth has been not so much regarded as the tinsel of less deserving nations. While other nations were contending with each other in bloody wars for useless glory, her sons were fighting with the waves of ocean, driving and chaining them back, that they might add fruitful fields to their sandy keys and narrow promontories; and upon the same ocean went forth their adventurous fleets, when commerce (save in Italy) was unknown to all of Europe but to themselves. Men of such training could not be otherwise than free. The revival of civil liberty must be traced to the Netherlands. The burghers of Ghent, and Bruges, and Antwerp, rocked the cradle of freedom. Their revolt against the Count of Flanders was the first successful encroachment by the people upon feudal tyranny. James Van Artavelde, though he may afterwards have been intoxicated with power, was the first successful champion of the people from their ranks. The extorted charters of her free and confederate cities have been lessons of rights, which nations have studied and transcribed. Nor has the character of Holland degenerated. The tyranny of Austria, the cruel bigotries of Spain, the fierce whirlwind of French revolutionary fury have successively swept over her, yet she remains unchanged. The elasticity of her national vigour has never been destroyed. She is indeed shorn of many of her dominions. Her fleets no longer rule the seas as when Van Tromp nailed the broom to his foremast-head, and caused even the British ensign to bow before him. Yet is she firm to her principles, claiming her rights against confederated Europe, neither intimidated by threats, nor cajoled by promises. She is still the purest, the most virtuous, the most religious, and, if you consider the mass of the people, the happiest and most enlightened nation of the old world.

"The principles of the Reformation found an early and quick growth among such a people. It is not improbable, from the frequent intercourse between England and Holland about that time, that the doctrines of Wickliffe, so truly and beautifully denominated 'the morning star of the Reformation,' may have obtained currency

among them, and, with those of Huss and Jerome, prepared the way for the increasing light of Luther's bolder demonstrations. Notwithstanding the bitter and bloody persecutions of their Spanish oppressors, who directed all their malicious force against the Protestants, vast numbers of all classes, clergy, nobility, and people, embraced the reformed faith, until, by the compromise of the famous confederation in 1579, they were protected in the exercise of their faith, which afterwards, in 1649, became, under William I., the established religion of the Independent and United Provinces.

"It is impossible to trace the history of our mother church, without admiring, not only her constancy under persecution, but her firm regard to sound doctrine, united to the most kind and gentle charity.

"The early confessions of the Netherland churches are among the brightest gems of the Reformation; and when, about the beginning of the seventeenth century, the purity of those doctrines of grace, in which they had long excelled, were threatened by Arminius and his associates, the Synod of Dort was called to confirm the faith of the people, and edify the Protestant world. I am aware that this famous assembly has been made the object of much abuse by the malicious and the ignorant. It may be, too, that in the heat of controversy, and in consequence of the obstinate bitterness of the remonstrant party, some of that uncharitableness, too common to the times, may have appeared. Yet we may safely affirm, that up to this period, and indeed long after, no dominant religion ever treated a schismatic minority with equal clemency. Before harsh censure is passed, we must remember the character of the age; and that if none were to cast a stone at the church of Holland but those who are without sin, she could escape in safety. Who could reproach her? Certainly not the Calvinists of Geneva. Certainly not the descendants of that church whose garments were scorched by the fires she kindled in Smithfield, and stained with the blood she shed in Scotland. Certainly not the children of those who hanged the Quakers and burned the witches. The excellent Dr. Thomas Scott (the commentator) has zealously vindicated the character of that venerable assembly from the garbled forgeries of Tilenus, multiplied by the notorious Heylin, and adopted by the uncandid Tomline. His testimony is the more valuable, as he was at one time under a contrary impression, which was removed by research. In that Synod sat delegates from all the reformed churches of Europe, including the Church of England and the Presbyterians of Scotland. The seraphic Hall, (Bishop of Norwich, and author of the 'Contemplations,') himself a delegate, declared that 'there was no place so like heaven as the Synod of Dort, and none where he should so much love to dwell.' Baxter, though (as has been well remarked) by no means attached to the peculiar and more rigid tenets of Calvinism, speaks of 'the Assembly at Westminster, and the Synod of Dort, as composed of as excellent and pious divines as any since the days of the apostles.' It is from this Synod we derive the books of our church.

"The christian charity of the church of Holland was worthy of the purity of her faith. Notwithstanding their sufferings from papal

persecution, the Catholics early obtained toleration among them. The Anabaptists, the Quakers, the adherents of the Augsburg Confession, and the Remonstrants, though expelled from their communion, were permitted to live by their side in the peaceable exercise of their worship. Even the despised and hunted Jews had privileges and immunities among them, which were refused them by every other nation.

"Holland was the asylum of the fugitive Protestants from almost every land. Thither fled from the surrounding countries the victims of Romish persecution. There the Scottish refugees from prelatical oppression pitched their tabernacles, and waited in safe exile for permission to return to their native land. There Robinson and the fathers of New England recruited their wasted energies, before they launched their adventurous barks to seek, in the wilds of a savage country, the rights of conscience denied them at home. The *Phœbe* and the *May-flower* sailed first from Holland, and only touched at the English port to receive more of their friends. And when, after the death of the noble Sully, massacre was let loose upon the Huguenots of France, Holland opened her gates of hospitality, and with her they lived in peace. It was at the Hague the unequalled Saurin delivered his finest discourses. Nor should it be forgotten that Great Britain received the blessing of religious toleration, when a prince of the house of Orange ascended her throne. Indeed, there was scarcely a church of Europe whose descendants in this country do not owe a debt of gratitude and veneration to that church from which we have derived our religious institutions, for the shelter and kindness she afforded their fathers in the day of their calamities.

"Nor in this alone was her charity seen. Her estimation of the truth at home taught her to extend it abroad. If we except an abortive attempt of the Swiss churches, in 1556, to evangelize Southern America, and the Swedish mission to Lapland, in 1559, under Gustavus Vasa, the church of the Netherlands was earliest in the missionary field of all the Protestant churches. Very early in the seventeenth century, so soon as they were enabled to do so after throwing off the Spanish yoke, they endeavoured, at vast expense of life and treasure, to spread the gospel in India. It is true, that in so doing they made many errors common to the ignorance of the time, which, in these days of light, we may regret; yet they accomplished much, and, in most instances, displayed a holy and zealous spirit. Schools were established, in which many were taught, and the book of life, in whole or in parts, with other pious treatises, translated into the Tamul, the Cingalese, the Malay, the corrupt Portuguese of Java, and the Formosan churches were planted in Ceylon, Java, Amboyna, Formosa, Sumatra, and many other islands. Only the ruins of these churches remain, although, from the many changes of power in the east, the Church of Holland can hardly be considered responsible for their decay. God has rewarded the church of Holland for this charity; for at this day, notwithstanding the prevalence of scepticism and neology on the Continent, there is no established church in Europe so pure in doctrine, and no country where more unaffected piety is found among the people.

"The character of the early church in this country was such as might be expected from such an ancestry. Houses of worship were erected in every settlement, and, according to the customs of the times, well endowed. The clergy educated in Holland were, with fewer exceptions than might have been expected from human frailty, self-denied, pious, and learned men. The church continued to increase, notwithstanding, that after the government went into the hands of the British, they were compelled to support the episcopal churches with their own, and that many of their children were induced to profess the established religion as a path to office; a circumstance which may account, in some degree, for the number of ancient Dutch names being found in that communion. The classes of Amsterdam still retained a parental authority over the colonial churches, until, not without difficulty from the known attachment of the Dutch to the institutions of their fathers, in 1772, the size of the denomination in America rendered its independence expedient. It may be remarked here, that the German Reformed Churches of this country received all their foreign ministry through the classes of Amsterdam, and the churches of New York. How long any connexion existed between them and us, and what the nature of this connexion was, I am not now prepared to say, although we find delegates from a church in Philadelphia sitting in one of our assemblies held in New York, April, 1738.

"From the period of her independence, we find the Dutch Church pursuing the even tenor of her usefulness, increasing slowly, yet as rapidly as she wished. Unlike most other churches, she retained her national cognomen after the revolution, (in which all her sons, with very rare, if any exceptions, were found upon the patriot side,) not only from attachment to her fathers, whose language was yet the household tongue of her people, but because large possessions were, as they are still, guaranteed to them by that title. Until within a few years, her people did not feel themselves called upon to advance religion by her peculiar forms, among other than her descendants. She was contented to see other denominations, in whom she had confidence, and with whom she lived in the strictest amity, extending their bounds, and liberally to assist them in so doing. There were, indeed, not wanting those who, without Dutch descent, admiring the excellence of her constitution and the steadiness of her character, sought to enrol themselves in her communion, whom she readily and cheerfully received, but she used no effort to make proselytes, except the practice of her virtues. In latter days, since the convulsions of other churches by dissensions in doctrine and policy, those who have found, by their own experience, the value of her quiet and sound character, have been anxious that others should share her advantages with them; so that, within a few years, many who love ecclesiastical order, pure truth, and, above all, freedom from contention, have swelled her members, and now the name of Reformed Dutch has ceased to be so much a national distinction, as the title of a sect holding certain peculiar features of government, possessing a certain religious character, and subject to certain distinct ecclesiastical courts. It has been supposed by some, that the retention of the

national appellative has been a disadvantage in exciting prejudice against our church. I think not, but on the contrary. 'A rose, by any other name, would smell as sweet;' and persons so weak as to object to a church and refuse its advantages because of a name, would be of little use to it, especially when that name is proverbial for steadiness, cleanliness, peacefulness, industry, and honesty.

"Her government is essentially Presbyterian. Her officers are fourfold—ministers of the word, teachers of theology, elders, and deacons.

"The preaching of the word, and the administration of the sacraments, are confined strictly to the ordained and qualified clergy. The parity of the ministry is strictly insisted upon, and there are "no lords over God's heritage" in all the Reformed Dutch churches.

"The teachers of theology are what their title indicates; and it has always been the careful custom, both of the mother church and the church in this country, to provide for the thorough and rigid training of the candidates for their ministry in all useful and sacred learning. It is but justice to our church to say, that in none other in the land is such preparation so rigidly insisted upon. A vote of our highest court is required to release a student from any part of the prescribed course of three years; and such vote is rarely given.

"The offices of elder and deacon resemble those in other Presbyterian churches. They are chosen by ballot, and hold their nominal rank for life, but are active officers only for the space of two years after their election, which election is so arranged, that half the board of elders and deacons is changed each year. The advantage of this simple arrangement is greater than at first would be thought. When officers of the church serve during good behaviour, many evils occur. They can only be removed by a criminal process against them for such offences as would exclude them from the communion of the church. But it may easily be seen, that an officer may become unfit for his duties, though not guilty of any such scandal. He may be imprudent, harsh, despotic, avaricious, or lukewarm. Besides, the long possession of power is apt to make men arrogant and overbearing; and experience has shown, that not a few of the troubles of churches arise from the faults and domineering arrogance of their elders. In adopting the more republican principle of rotation in office, the Dutch church avoids such difficulties; while, if necessity requires it, she may retain the valuable services of such in whose worth she has confidence. I believe it to be owing to this feature, among others, that the church has maintained such a peaceful character. Equally removed from the democracy of Congregationalism, the monarchy of Episcopacy, and the oligarchy of Presbyterianism,* she presents in her representative government, united to rotation in office, the purest republican constitution. These offices, instead of being kept entirely aloof from each other, were united with the

* "It is hoped that the preacher will not be supposed to use these terms in any other than their pure sense, as expressive of *modes of government*. He has certainly no intention of applying opprobrious epithets to denominations of Christians, who should have the high regard of every sincere follower of Christ."

pastor in what is termed the Consistory, under which title the elders and deacons united, discharge certain functions, and have the advantage of mutual consultation. In times of unusual difficulty, all who have ever been elders and deacons, are called together in one general council, which is termed the Great Consistory; that in the multitude of counsellors who have had, themselves, experience in the oversight of the church, the ruling officers may find wisdom to direct them. To its Consistory, also, is committed the safety of each individual church, and they may, if they deem it necessary, suspend the minister from the exercise of his functions, until a decision of classis, the presbyterial court, be had in the matter.

"Another excellent peculiarity is the *censura morum*, or inquiry into the christian walk of the church members, held before every communion season. In consequence of the regular recurrence of this duty, no elder may, without guilt, positive as well as negative, refuse to bring before his brethren such causes of offence as may be known to him.

"The classis and the synod of the church so nearly resemble similar bodies in other churches which have embraced the Presbyterian form of government, that we need not dwell upon them, except to say, that the systematic order of business which the church has established and insists upon, renders its transactions peculiarly easy.

"The Reformed Dutch Church has a liturgy adapted to all the offices or occasions of worship, ordinary and extraordinary. This liturgy may or may not be used upon ordinary occasions, according to the discretion of the minister; and it is perhaps to be regretted, that its disuse, with that of several other of the forms observed by the mother church, has become so general among us, from perhaps a weak desire to conform to the habits of other denominations. Certainly there are occasions when the forms of prayer would be at least as edifying as many extemporaneous effusions we hear from the desk, and it is evident that the wise fathers of the church did not intend that they should remain a dead letter in our books. The forms upon extraordinary occasions, such as the administration of the sacraments, ordinations, and acts of discipline are required to be used. In these, whatever may be the unfaithfulness of the minister, the great doctrines of grace, in their unadulterated purity, are brought before the minds, and impressed upon the hearts of the people. The church earnestly advises that the law of God, in the ten commandments, should be read according to his express precept each sabbath, in the hearing of the people: and never should a congregation of our church separate, until they have united together in ascribing praise to the triune God. It is required, also, by the church, that her catechism should not only be taught to the children of the church, but that it should be carefully and systematically explained: a duty which the minister may not omit, unless in peculiar circumstances, of which the classis must judge. These peculiarities do not indeed appear to be very important, yet those who have traced the history of the church, believe that much of its steadiness and purity is owing to their observance.

"Their theological sentiments, as already mentioned, are those of the Synod of Dort, and every minister is bound by a solemn vow to teach none other than the doctrines set forth in her confession; and if at any time he seem to differ from them, he must notify his classis of the fact before he attempt to promulgate his new doctrines."

The following extract from the "Constitution of the Dutch Reformed Church," exhibits their mode of conducting elections.

"The manner of choosing elders and deacons in churches already organized, shall be as follows:—A double number may be nominated by the Consistory, out of which the members of the church, in full communion, may choose those who shall serve. Or, all the said members may unite in nominating and choosing the whole number, without the interference of the Consistory. Or, the Consistory, for the time being, as representing all the members, may choose the whole, and refer the persons thus chosen, by publishing them in the church for the approbation of the people. This last method has been found most convenient, especially in large churches, and has long been generally adopted. But where that, or either of the other modes, has for many years been followed in any church, there shall be no variation or change, but by previous application to the classis, and express leave obtained for altering such custom.

"The elders and deacons shall be chosen to serve two years, except when chosen to fill a vacancy or vacancies occasioned by death, removal out of the congregation, resignation, or dismissal from office, by the sentence of the Consistory; in either of which cases, the person or persons chosen to fill such vacancy or vacancies, shall serve for the residue of the term only.

"In order to avoid the inconvenience of an entire change at one time, the first elders and deacons of new congregations shall, at the first meeting of the Consistory after their ordination, be put into two classes, and the classes be marked number 1 and 2; and the names to be put into each class shall be determined by ballot, and the term of service in Consistory of those in the first class shall expire at the end of the first year, so that one half of the whole number of elders and deacons may be elected annually. The same course shall be pursued by all the Consistories when they shall deem it requisite to enlarge the number of their elders and deacons, so far as relates to the additional number of members chosen by them. But this does not forbid the liberty of immediately choosing the same persons again, if, from any circumstances, it may be judged expedient to continue them in Consistory by a re-election."

One passage in these extracts will throw a little light upon what has in Britain been considered an unhappy feature of the American churches. I refer to the numerous sects or denominations to be found in the United States.

The population of the United States has been drawn from almost every European nation, and from a great many of the different sects prevailing on this side of the Atlantic. And as perfect freedom of religious belief and of religious worship are there enjoyed, it may be expected that whenever an individual can find two or three others holding the same religious sentiments, he will endeavour to per-

petuate the worship and doctrines to which he has been accustomed from childhood.

Of most of the American sects there will be found corresponding sects in Britain, as Presbyterians, Associate Presbyterians, Associate Reformed Presbyterians, Baptists, Congregationalists, Methodists, Primitive Methodists, Episcopalians, Roman Catholics, Lutherans, Quakers or Friends, United Brethren or Moravians, New Jerusalemites, Universalites, Unitarians, Jews, Infidels.

Of the other sects, the Dutch Reformed, the German Reformed Churches, and the Mennonites, have only transplanted thither the modes of worship adopted by their fathers.

The Cumberland Presbyterians, the Episcopal Methodists, the Free-will Baptists, and the Seventh-day Baptists, have only combined the peculiar sentiments of two or more of the sects already enumerated; and

The sects of Shakers, Campbellites, Dunkers, *Christians*, and Six-principle Baptists, embrace almost the whole of the remaining population, and these are out-numbered by sects peculiar to Britain.

If, then, either the population or the extent of territory be made the standard of comparison, it will be found that the number of sects or different denominations of worshippers in America, is small, compared either with those in England or in Scotland.

DOUBTFUL MARRIAGES NOT SUBJECTS FOR CHURCH DISCIPLINE.

(To the Editor.)

MY DEAR SIR—Although Mr. Heudebourck's "Query on Church Discipline," pp. 565, 6, is addressed to you, it appears from the tenor of his observations that he is desirous to obtain also the opinions of others of his brethren.

Were I permitted to occupy a few pages in your Magazine, I would begin by asking Mr. Heudebourck whether he has fairly stated the question. He asks—

"What is the duty of a Christian community in reference to those amongst them who venture, after repeated exhortation on the part of the brethren, and in the face of the solemn ultimate charge of the church, to rebel against the authority of the Lord Jesus Christ by entering into the marriage contract with an acknowledged unbeliever? Is it the duty of the church to maintain the obligation of the laws by excluding the party who has determined on violating them, or is it not?"

Now, is not this a *petitio principii*? No nonconforming Christian will deny that rebellion against the authority of the Lord Jesus Christ subjects a man to excommunication. But let me ask where, in this instance, is the authority found? Is it in the statute book, or does it spring from the executive? Is it in the New Testament, or is it in the church? Is the offender ejected for having disobeyed

the commands of Christ, or for having refused to hear the church? It seems to me far easier to maintain the second position than the first. Again, Mr. Heudebourck has introduced the phrase, "an avowed unbeliever," whereas the practice to which he refers is that of excluding a church member for marrying one who is not a church member, simply on the ground of non-membership.

Before I proceed to mention some of the difficulties which to me appear to render such an act in most cases inexpedient, and in some instances impracticable, I move the previous question, *Has Christ given us any express law on the subject?* Because, if he has, there is an end to doubt and disputation, and difficulties must no longer be regarded. Whatever the master orders, we are bound to do, asking no questions and feeling no regret. But it should be borne in mind that the question before us is not whether Christ has given us general directions, from which we may learn our individual duty in the matter, but whether he has given such directions as authorize the interference of his churches. These questions are perfectly distinct. There are many instances of obedience to the laws of God, which it would be easy to show are strictly "cases of conscience," and with which no ecclesiastical legislation, however pure or scriptural, can interfere. It is a general law, and adequate for every purpose of individual guidance, so far as intelligent Christians are concerned, (1 Cor. x. 31,) "Whether, therefore, ye eat or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God;" but it would be impossible for our churches to sit in judgment upon its individual obligation, and the very attempt would make them rivals of the Star Chamber and the Inquisition. He that judgeth all things is the Lord; and there are many questions, both of moral and religious obligation, which no inferior tribunal can entertain. To revert to the law which I have cited, if I were the master of a household, I should say, "It is for the glory of God that I should have religious servants," (Psalm ci.) but I should certainly think it a great infringement of my liberty if the church were to insist on my giving employment only to those who are members of some religious community. So, if I were a servant, I should say, "it is for the glory of God that I should serve in a family where the welfare of my soul will be the first consideration of my employers;" but still I should feel it a grievance for the church to forbid my entering the employment of persons who are not church-members. If I were a tradesman or a merchant, wanting assistants, or a partner, I should say, "It is for the glory of God that my associates in business should be fellow heirs with me of the grace of life;" but while I should consider myself bound, *cæteris paribus*, to give religious men the preference, I should esteem it an undue assumption of authority for the church to send a deputation of its office-bearers to my shop, or counting-house, to ascertain whether all in my employ were Christians, and if not, to insist upon their discharge or mine, theirs from my service, or mine from the church of God. Or to come at once to the case in hand. Were I an unmarried man, and to think of altering my condition, I should say, "It is for the glory of God that I should marry one who will be a helper of my faith and joy;"

but I should esteem it a gross violation of my Christian liberty for the church to step in and say, "Miss **** is not a member, and if you marry her you must be expelled." I might have reasons, and very satisfactory reasons, for believing the piety of Miss **** to be of a far higher order than that of many who had been adjudging the question of the lawfulness of my marrying her, but if I were to venture such an observation, I might be met with the reply, "We have nothing to do with your opinion as to her piety; the fact is, that she is not a church-member, and that settles the question, she is an unbeliever, an unbeliever by her own confession." Now, with all the deference which I feel towards the beloved brethren whom Mr. Heudebourck mentions as entertaining the opinion that such interference would be just and scriptural, I cannot satisfy myself that their views on this subject are correct. And I feel assured that I should be guilty of great injustice towards them, were I for one moment to apprehend that either of them would be displeased with me for stating my sentiments. As to the expediency of doubtful marriages there is no difference of opinion between us. I have been the pastor of a Christian church too many years not to know that, questionable marriages are a curse of which it is impossible to calculate the extent; but I have usually seen, in such cases, that humanly speaking, the last thread of hope which has prevented the mistaken and miserable victim of blind affection from falling into utter worldliness, and finally into the pit of perdition, has been the tie of church-membership. This has still had a hold upon the conscience, it has still been a link binding the soul to thoughts of better days gone by, and hopes of brighter times to come; and I, for one, could not venture to sever that last bond of mercy, unless by the authority of God. The question remains,—Have we that authority?

Two passages are regarded as conveying it. One is 2 Cor. vi. 14, "Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers." But the whole context shows that the writer is treating of church-fellowship, and simply of church-fellowship. He is showing the materials, the polished stones of which God's living temples are to be constructed; or, in other words, he is describing the characters whom we are to admit to christian communion. The Lord's table, he gives us to understand, is not to be thrown open to the crowd, including, as it does, idolaters and infidels of various grades, but believers are to meet in their associated capacity *as* believers and *with* believers, and are therefore to exclude all others from their communion; "for what fellowship (he asks) hath righteousness with unrighteousness? and what communion hath light with darkness? and what concord hath Christ with Belial? or what part hath he that believeth with an infidel? and what agreement hath the temple of God with idols?" The only possible answer to each of these queries is—*none whatever*. And this is the grand principle on which all churches of New Testament order are founded, although it is at variance with the practice of those religious bodies which require of their communicants no real evidence of discipleship. It may, perhaps, be contended, that though the Apostle had church-fellowship immediately in view, the general

principle contained in this exhortation may be carried further. I admit it, but at once inquire, by whom is the principle to be carried out? by individuals, or by churches? And if churches are to carry it out beyond its strict application, how can they cite it as authority, and where are they to stop? Surely the master, the servant, the tradesman, and the merchant are just as much under its authority as Cœlebs in search of a wife.

The other passage is, 1 Cor. vii. 39, where permission is given to a widow to marry again, but "only in the Lord." I wish it to be borne in mind that between myself and Mr. Heudebourck there is no difference of opinion as to the individual obligation of marrying "only in the Lord," in the sense in which this passage is commonly taken, but simply as to our authority for making it a subject of church discipline. But if I were engaged in reasoning with a Christian who needed to be convinced that he ought not to marry even an irreligious person, it appears to me that that text would only, in an indirect application, strengthen my argument. At any rate, it would do no more for it than 1 Cor. x. 31. The Apostle had been showing that, under existing circumstances, it was the duty of the Corinthian Christians to abstain from marriage; not that those already married should be divorced, but that all unmarried persons who could reconcile their minds to a single life should prefer it. He assigns, as one reason for such a preference, that "he that is unmarried careth for the things that belong to the Lord, how he may please the Lord;" but he goes on to state, that though marriage was not expedient, nevertheless it was lawful, and that though a widow would prove her wisdom and piety by preferring perpetual widowhood to a second marriage, yet she might marry if "in the Lord:" the Apostle advises her to remain as she is, but at the same time intimates that if she thinks a second marriage would be for the glory of God, there is nothing in his instructions to hinder it. It would be difficult to show that this passage greatly differs from Rom. xiv. 6, "He that regardeth the day, regardeth it unto the Lord; and he that regardeth not the day, unto the Lord doth he not regard it."

But even admitting it could be shown that in primitive churches the members only married among themselves, the circumstances of the times would account for the fact, without rendering their example binding on all succeeding generations, for this obvious reason, —all Christians of mature years were then members; all besides were Jews or Pagans. As all new converts were received immediately, without hesitation, the risk incurred by their profession being accounted a test of their sincerity, it was fairly presumed that those "without" were as they appeared to be, living without God and without hope. But is this the condition of all who are not included in our churches? I need not to be reminded, that it is the condition of all our hearers, until they are made new creatures in Christ Jesus, as much so as if they had previously been Jews or Pagans. I fully admit it; but I contend that our churches do not include the whole piety of our congregations. In one view, this is a matter of grateful thanksgiving, but, in another, it is a serious

evil, and as such, a subject of lamentation. It is a matter of thanksgiving that we can entertain a good hope of many who have never made the ultimate profession of discipleship, but of lamentation that they are so far inconsistent, as to disregard that which appears to us the obvious and imperative duty of christian communion. We may show them their error, we may endeavour to remove their misapprehensions, but the church has no power to compel them to come in. The question is, are we to regard them therefore, as heathen men and publicans? While we lament their non-membership, are we to deny their piety? Perhaps there are few of our churches where it would not be well if some would change places. After all the care and vigilance we can exercise, there not only are some out who ought to be in, but some are in who ought to be out. Some of the latter class, it may be, are persons of irreproachable character, and therefore we can find no specific ground for their exclusion, but still we have reason to apprehend that they have little spirituality of mind, and that if they have faith enough to be saved, it will be "yet so as by fire,"—they are mere brands plucked from the burning, not plants of righteousness in which God is glorified. Now, let us suppose that a person of this class, a church member, marries one, who although not a church member, is most undeniably a christian, what shall we do? Shall we expel the doubtful member for marrying a person whose claim to piety is far less doubtful than his own? but this must be done if we make church membership the rule. And then, with what membership shall we be satisfied? Shall it be exclusively that of our own communion? There are some religious bodies among whom membership is no test of piety, and is not even presumed to be so. Are we then to excommunicate a Congregationalist for marrying an Episcopalian? Such mixed marriages are seldom productive of happiness, but are they a legitimate subject of church discipline?

Moreover, one great end of excommunication is, the restoration of the offender, and this restoration is not to be withheld when there are satisfactory indications of repentance.—2 Cor. ii. 6—8. Now, in the case supposed, is the excluded member to be restored on bringing forth fruit meet for repentance? or, is he to be cast out for ever? If the last, where is our Scripture precedent? where is the law of perpetual banishment? Or, if the first,—what fruits of repentance must we demand? That the marriage contract shall be dissolved? or that a man shall acknowledge to the assembled church, his deep regret for having married his wife? In either case, perpetual wretchedness, or something worse, would be the probable penalty, a penalty which might continue to be borne years after the church had revoked its sentence of exclusion. I admit that there are cases in which a church would be bound to interfere, but they are not likely to occur. If a man should marry within the range of prohibited relationship, whether in blood or by a former marriage, the duty of the church would be as plain as in the case which occurred at Corinth, (1 Cor. v.) or, if a church member should marry

an avowed infidel, or a person of notoriously bad character; but in the latter instances it appears to me, that the matter to be brought before the church, would be the destitution of piety indicated by such a marriage, rather than the marriage itself, and the law by which such cases should be tried is not found in any express prohibition of such a particular marriage, but in the application of that which is laid down by our Lord, *Matt. xviii. 15-17*, a law which would extend to other ungodly associations, as well as to an ungodly marriage. See also *2 Thess. iii. 6*. But the greatest difficulty yet remains to be stated, and that is, the danger of blending civil and religious immunities. It is a danger which involves most fearfully the peace and purity of our churches. If we introduce other motives for church membership than those which are purely religious, we throw open the doors of our sanctuaries for every abuse that may follow. The pilgrim fathers of America, as they are called, may suffice us for a warning. They thought, and thought with truth, that all civil rulers ought to submit to the authority of Christ, but not contented with the admission of this principle, they attempted to carry it out by making church membership an indispensable qualification for the magistracy. The motive was good, but the measure was disastrous. A recent writer in the *Congregational Magazine*, has shown that its bitter fruits may still be seen in the Socinianism and irreligion of New England. Church members were in some instances raised to the magistracy for their piety; but in the vast majority of cases, aspirants for distinction made church membership a stepping-stone to office. And who will deny that love is quite as powerful a motive as ambition? that the hope of marriage may be as attractive as the hope of magistracy? I will suppose then, no impossible case, but one which may happen, and is likely to happen continually. An amiable young man, who lacks one thing, and only one thing, to complete his character, but that one thing is piety, finds himself in love, but the object of his affection is a church member. He knows that to propose himself would be, in other words, to propose excommunication to her, and would at once obtain a refusal. But he adopts a more prudent course: he waits; he feigns conversion; obtains admission to the church; gains his object; has his reward: but he is made a hypocrite for life, and as such, becomes a plague to his pastor, and a curse to the church of God.

Should you think proper to insert these observations, I shall be deeply grieved if any one, on reading them, should imagine that I am an advocate, or even an apologist of doubtful marriages. It is my deep conviction, that many as are the discomforts and miseries of single life, that to a Christian they are infinitely preferable to a marriage where there is only doubtful piety. I believe that if a Christian wishes to embitter his remaining days, he cannot take a more effectual measure than to take an unconverted wife. A servant may leave his master, a master may dismiss his servant, a tradesman or a merchant may dissolve an irreligious partnership, but marriage is for life. But the question before me, was not whe-

ther a Christian is at liberty to ruin his own happiness, but whether his having done so is a legitimate occasion for the exercise of church-discipline.

I am, my dear Sir,
Yours in the Gospel,
D. E. FORD.

Lymington, Hants, September 3, 1838.

REV. O. T. DOBBIN, EXPLANATORY OF HIS VIEWS OF THE
MILLENNIUM.

(To the Editor.)

DEAR SIR,—YOUR reviewer has been more than kind in his notice of my Sermon on the Personal Reign, (pp. 510, 511,)—he has been flattering.

Allow me, however, a line or two to correct a mistake into which he has fallen, and which must convey a false impression of my sentiments wherever it circulates. I have a claim to this indulgence, as the question is one simply of *fact*. With the *opinions* of the reviewer I should not meddle.

I believe, with the reviewer, in an apostasy to follow the millennium, and I made provision for it in the statement to which he objects, that during that blessed period “there will still be those upon the earth who will be secret rebels against his (the Lord Jesus’) authority, even while professing attachment to his person, and submission to his rule.”—p. 48.

How else are the apostates to be supplied? Were all the world truly converted, there could be none under any circumstances, for the children of God *cannot* “draw back unto perdition.” (Heb. x. 39.) “*They shall never perish.*” (John x. 28.)

But I must not argue the point; I merely desire to correct the misapprehension of the reviewer. And had it not been evident, from the exception that he takes, that there has been an indistinctness in my incidental notice of this question, I should have referred the person who wished to know my opinion about the apostasy, not as I now do, to page 15, paragraph beginning “At the close of the millennium,” &c. and pages 48, 49, but should have said, *vide passim*.

I presume the “*auriculum*” of your composition and “*idiosyncrocies*” are intended respectively for “*curriculum*” and “*idiosyncrasies*.” For the use of the obnoxious words I might offer some apology; but that to reply would be little short of *Laesa majestatis crimen* against the irresponsible *dicta* of criticism, to which none would submit more cheerfully than myself.

I am, dear Sir,
Respectfully yours,

O. T. DOBBIN.

Arundel, Aug. 2, 1838.

DR. BENNETT'S FINAL COMMUNICATION ON SOLOMON'S SONG.

(To the Editor.)

THE honourable frankness with which Dr. Smith has conceded the canonicity of Solomon's Song, is not, indeed, any thing more than those who know him would expect from him, when convinced; but it affords one peculiar pleasure by permitting us to hope, that, with the communication I now send, our contest may close. Following, then, the order which he has adopted, I observe,

I. That I decline all further discussion on the *interpretation* of the Song. For though I adhere to my original opinion, which I think capable of more abundant proof, I should never have obtruded it on the public, had not opposite views been urged as reasons for rejecting the book.

II. Passing by other observations, that I may not revive and protract the controversy; I merely beg leave to say, that though I was aware of the amended translation of Galatians iv. 24, "which things are allegorized," I saw no reason for adverting to it, nor can I now approve of the use made of it, nor of the language quoted from Dr. Ryland; though he, like Dr. Smith, is one of the last men with whom I should like to differ.

III. I am most happy to leave Dr. Smith in possession of the utmost advantage, from his defence against my charge of contradiction.

IV. For my reply to this head I refer to I. and II.

V. and VI. These heads apply to the most important points, for the sake of which I engaged in the controversy. I am happy to see that Dr. Smith's learned work admitted, that "of the *mode* of inspiration we are necessarily ignorant." For as I am convinced that this is true, so I think it should have prevented some divines from publishing what is neither wise, nor true, nor safe. On different kinds and degrees of inspiration, they have "darkened counsel by word, without knowledge." I am happy to see by his note, on a very unwise passage from an Oxford divine, that my respected opponent believes, "even with respect to common and natural things, the declarations of the Bible are infallible." If I understand this aright, it is all I contend for.

With many thanks to you for the space you have afforded to me, and to your readers for whatever patient attention they may have been able to indulge me with,

I remain, faithfully your's,

JAMES BENNETT.

Islington, Sept. 17, 1838.

P.S. I have purposely avoided intermeddling with the controversy on 2 Tim. iii. 16, but I can by no means admit that the subject is exhausted.

R E V I E W.

- I. *The Little Sanctuary. A Series of Domestic Prayers, for Morning and Evening, during Four Weeks: to which are added, Offices for Special Occasions. By the Rev. Richard Winter Hamilton, Minister of Belgrave Chapel, Leeds. London: Hamilton, Adams and Co. 1838.*
- II. *The Family Sanctuary; a Form of Domestic Devotion for every Sabbath in the Year, &c. pp. 560. London: Smith and Elder. 1838.*
- III. *Sibthorpe's Family Liturgy. A Course of Morning and Evening Prayers for a Family, arranged and compiled on the Plan of a Liturgy. Post 8vo. pp. 186. By the Rev. R. Waldo Sibthorpe, B. D., Fellow of Magdalene College, Oxon, &c. &c. London: Seeley and Co.*
- IV. *Family Prayers. By the Author of Explanatory and Practical Comments on the New Testament. Post 8vo. pp. 280. Dublin.*

"THE thralldom of an unholy law," (we thank the Rev. P. Hall for the expressive phrase,) was never more lamentably deplored than it was when certain clergymen of the Established Church in Ireland presented an address to the Right Reverend Father in God, the Lord Archbishop of Dublin. It appears from this address, that his Grace of Dublin does not consider any mode of approach to the Father of the spirits of all flesh as prayer, unless it be written down, printed, and read from a book. A great number of the clergy of his diocese are of a different opinion. They think it possible to pray to God without the use of words dictated, and put into their mouths by other men. We need hardly say that we concur with the clergy, and are at issue with the Archbishop. Prayer is the desire of the heart, not the repetition of a form of words. We are far from supposing that all who use a liturgical composition are destitute of true prayer, yet we shrewdly suspect that very few who use a form of prayer, while they decidedly object to free or extemporaneous prayer, have imbibed the spirit of genuine devotion. It is delightful to those who know the value, and have enjoyed the consolation of an untrammelled address to the God of all grace and mercy, to mark how some of the least fearful, among the pious ministers of the Established Church, break through the icy fetters of a rigid formality, in the prayer which precedes, and in that which follows their pulpit addresses; and it is equally instructive, though not so gratifying, to mark the endless repetition of the same form of words, by the great majority of those who minister in her communion; and this not only by the cold-hearted formalists, but by men whose hearts are warm, whose minds are clear and comprehensive, whose elocution is fluent, and whose piety is of the simple, ardent, and true scripture character,

but who are in pulpit bondage through fear of "an unholy law." From such a thralldom we are thankful to be free.

It would be an interesting and an important enquiry to the pious members of the Established Church, to ascertain whether extemporaneous prayer is by the laws and usages of that church justifiable or not. Our objections to that church are strong enough already, but could it be proved inconsistent with her rubric, that her ministers should ever address their petitions and thanksgivings to God in language suggested by the occasion which gives rise to them, we should have one more objection quite as strong as any we now entertain. And on the supposition that all the rest could be answered, this one interdict put upon the free expression of the desires to God by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving, would be amply sufficient in itself to justify us in our separation from her communion.

The writers of the address to which we have referred contended, that to urge the non-recognition of extemporaneous prayer by the Established Church, is contrary to the whole spirit of her regulations, and to the intention of her reformers. Now the Archbishop employs an argument to prove that the spirit which pervades her regulations is opposed to extemporaneous prayer. His argument is as follows:—"That it is impossible for uninspired men to agree together in a prayer offered by one of them, if they do not know, at least, the substance of the prayer before they hear him utter the words." Now observe—his Grace employs an abstract argument to prove that a certain spirit, which is said to pervade a certain book, is not to be found in it. Let us suppose for a moment that we agree with his Grace of Dublin, and think that such a spirit cannot exist in the Book of Common Prayer; we should yet, we believe, knowing something of abstract reasoning, not employ it to disprove that which we merely do not believe. We should remember that it is a question of fact, and, therefore, not to be decided by abstract reasoning, which thus employed, would be similar to proving, from abstract reasoning, that no bishop ought to be given to filthy lucre, and then leaping, by one long bound, to the astounding conclusion, that none who ever wore lawn sleeves was at any time chargeable with the sin of covetousness. According to this mode of reasoning, avarice and every other sin might be expelled, not only from the throne and from the pulpit, but from every pew, from every house, and from every heart. It is a mode of reasoning the reverse of that employed by some good people in the north, who say, "what maun be, maun be." His Grace's is "what ought to be must be." But we crave pardon for reasoning with an archbishop.* To turn then from ab-

* We are perfectly aware that a man of a liberal and enlarged mind, in the exercise of authority, whether civil or ecclesiastical, has, in Ireland, a very difficult part to act. A Bishop, or even an Archbishop, will probably find his difficulty increasing in proportion to his elevation. The political members of the body ecclesiastical will swarm around him with letters, expostulations, protests and remonstrances; and it is quite possible, that under the mask of religion they may conceal designs of a character altogether carnal and secular. We heard about two years since of certain prayer-meetings, (not among "canting Methodists" or "political Dissenters," but amongst staunch Church and State men) in which the overthrow of his late Majesty's government was any thing but deprecated—from which, while every liberal feeling was absent, a spirit the most fanatically

abstract reasoning to fact, we open the book of Canons, and in the 55th, we learn that the minister is to offer, in his own conceived words, a prayer "as briefly and as conveniently as he can."—Bishop Wilkins says that the desk is to be in respect to freedom in prayer, "no hindrance to the pulpit." Bishop Hall, of whom it was said that no man ever drew the line of the liturgy so high, says, "ministers do ordinarily pray for the king in their own expressions:" and again, "Did we utterly abridge all ministers of the public use of any conceived prayer, on what occasion soever, the argument against a liturgy might hold force against us; but that being yielded, our liturgy is untouched." Again, he says, "it is a false ground that the imposing of the book ties godly men in prayer. An enjoined liturgy may well stand with the freedom of a prayer conceived. The desk is no hindrance to the pulpit. He is wanting to his duty that slackeneth either." But we leave it to the clergy of his diocese to refute his Grace's inference from his abstract reasoning, by an appeal to the writers of his own church. We feel disposed to refer him to earlier authorities than Wilkins and Hall. Justin wrote his first apology about the 154th year of the christian era. In the 87th section of that apology, he says "The person who presides utters prayers and thanksgivings according to his ability; and the people testify their joyful consent, by saying, Amen." Tertullian flourished at the close of the second and the beginning of the third century. In his ninth chapter on prayer, he says, "Petitions are to be made according to the state of each person, the established and ordinary prayer (*præmissâ legitimâ et ordinariâ oratione*,) being first uttered. We are authorised to express the desires which occur to us; we are authorised to erect the structure of petitions for additional blessings." In the 30th chapter of his Apology he says, "We Christians pray without any prompter, because our prayers are from the heart." What would the Christians who were contemporaries with Tertullian or Justin Martyr have said, had some civil or ecclesiastical authority enjoined upon them to pray in their assemblies for public worship, only in the words of others, written down for their perusal? And could they have been informed by one gifted with the spirit of prophecy, that, in a future age, two churches, one in the remote north, the other in the then undiscovered western world, would impose upon their ministers the "bondage of an unholy law," which would prescribe, under heavy penalties, a book of forms for every part of public worship, rigorously prohibiting the use of any other than the authorised expressions. They would only have yielded credence to it from a conviction of the plenary inspiration of him who made the communication.

Public pre-composed forms of prayer were not enjoined on professing Christians until the church, over-run with ignorance and barbarism, became the prey of an indolent, illiterate, immoral, and

sectarian pervaded no inconsiderable part of the devotional exercise. If the Archbishop of Dublin has such zealots to deal with, we sincerely pity him: while we can almost forgive his interposition among his clergy, for the purpose of rendering them, if not more devout, yet at least more canonical.

avaricious clergy. There is, indeed, in a Canon of the Council of Carthage (A.D. 397,) some advice given to persons who copied out prayers for their own use from the compositions of others. They are enjoined not to use them till they have consulted brethren better instructed than themselves, and obtained their approbation of the prayers. In a canon also of another African council, held soon after the commencement of the fifth century, there is a prescript to this effect: "No prayers, masses, &c. shall be said in the church, which have not been examined by the more prudent kind of ministers, or approved in a synod, lest any composition should be brought forward which should betray error as to the faith, or ignorance, or carelessness." Every one at all conversant with ecclesiastical history is aware that this was a time of great declension from the spirit of the gospel. A multitude of ceremonies, borrowed from Judaism, or Heathenism, had bedizened and deformed the simple beauty of Christianity. Pomp, worldly-mindedness, ambition, and an assuming arrogance, had grown upon the clergy as their secular dignity and authority had increased; and not a few of the corruptions which a later age saw increased to an indefinite extent prevailed, and had obtained an establishment by prescription. Yet how evident is it, from the language of the canons we have cited, that those ministers of the churches, who could not compose prayers for themselves, but had recourse to the compositions of other persons, were regarded as weak and defective in their ministerial character. It is equally evident, that there were at that time no public liturgies; for had there been such compositions, these inefficient ministers would not have had recourse to persons who had composed forms of devotion for the church, these they would have found, as the clergy of the united churches of England and Ireland, and the episcopal churches of British America and the United States now find, every thing that relates to the devotional part of the service, ready prepared to their hand. It is to these times and events that St. Augustine refers, when he expressly says, that these ignorant ministers used prayers composed not only by unskilful and loquacious persons, but by heretics, while yet, through their extreme ignorance, they were not capable of distinguishing, but thought them good. St. August. Op. Ed. Col. 1616, p. 65.

We have then no appearance of liturgies in the church till corruption and ignorance, like dark and portentous clouds, had nearly obscured the light of heaven. The way of truth was almost unknown; true piety decayed, superstitious ceremonies increased, and the life and energy of devout emotions were exchanged for the heartless repetition of precomposed prayers. Undoubtedly many of the old written forms of prayer were penned by men of great piety, and not a few of them by individuals of superior minds, and very ardent devotion. It was natural that such should obtain a more extensive circulation, and from these, judicious men made selections, which, under the designation of collects, have passed down to our time, and of these some in the Liturgy of the Established Church, are among the most beautiful portions of that series of forms of prayer.

It would be no unimportant work to write a history of forms of prayer in the christian church, commencing with their rise as publicly read, and tracing their origin to its true source. Then marking and detailing their gradual adoption, until the mass of the Roman, and the corresponding mummary of the Greek church, left the people nothing to do but to hear and wonder, and the priest nothing to do but to gesticulate and to repeat. The history might then descend to the time of the reformation, when a great body broke off, not only from the doctrines, but from the whole ceremonials of the Roman Catholic Church. But this was not the case with all the reformed churches; the Church of England retained a great portion of the ritual of Rome, and it still continues to enforce an observance of it on all who minister in her edifices of religious worship. But there is now, among a great body of her pious clergy, a wish for a change. These good men are anxious to be freed from the servile formalism of one unvarying routine of words and phrases, and to be at liberty to adapt their expressions to the ever fluctuating forms of human misery, sinfulness, hope, consolation, and joyfulness. They are not fettered by the ritual of their church in the work-houses, the schools, the farm-houses and cottages, in which they now, in many localities, dare to tread in the footsteps of the Nonconformist; and having tasted the sweets of this rational, scriptural, and most delightful liberty, they feel, within the walls of the church in which they minister on the first day of the week, the chilling influence of the return to the fetters of uniformity in worship. These good men are, in spirit, returning to primitive times, when unshackelled by human prescription, whether civil or ecclesiastical, the disciples of Jesus, in their meetings for public worship, poured out their spontaneous, and therefore appropriate petitions, before that God and Saviour who looketh not at the outward appearance, but at the heart. The liturgical authority of the English church is on the wane. Pious men still within her pale are panting for liberty; nor will they *all* pant in vain. If the bench of Bishops, or rather the Government, the master of the whole Episcopal body, does not strike off the manacles, and let good men lift up holy hands "without wrath or doubting," they must prepare for secessions, for there are spirits strong in principle, and of a bold and uncompromising integrity of character, who will brook any thing rather than a persevering infringement of their religious liberty.

We have been led to these remarks on the comparative claims of Liturgical and extempore prayer, from a view of "*Sibthorpe's Family Liturgy*." Mr. Sibthorpe employs a similar argument for liturgical prayers in the family, to those adduced for this method of prayer in public worship. "Extempore prayers," says Mr. S., "even of a customary length, and much more when prolonged, have a tendency to distract the attention, and deaden the devotion of the younger members and domestics of the family, not to say of all who are not of eminent attainment in devotion. It is not so much the length of the service altogether which is objectionable, as the want of participation and consequently of interest. The unbroken atten-

tion required, first, to apprehend an unbroken succession of petitions, and then to turn them into personal prayer; the monotony, in short, of the worship." Our author then very candidly tells us, that he has "sought to remedy these evils by drawing up a course of prayer on the plan of a liturgy; so as really to unite in prayer and praise the whole assembled household."

From the above remarks of Mr. S. it is evident that he thinks much more highly of a form of prayer, than of extempore prayer. Let us now turn to the last author on our list. His prefatory remarks, while they meet our views, and, we believe, we may add, the views of the great majority of persons of serious piety, are opposed to those of Mr. Sibthorpe. The following are the expressions referred to:—

"These forms of prayer are intended for the use, or assistance of those heads of families who do not feel able in whole or in part, to pray extempore. But extempore prayer is so much more valuable than any pre-composed form; so much occasional matter arising out of the Scripture read, or of the circumstances of the family, might be profitably introduced, that all who pray extempore in private, are strongly urged to do so in social worship. 'Out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh;' and when the Spirit has filled the heart with the love of Jesus, the same Spirit will cause the words to flow in praise and prayer."—*Family Prayers*.—*Preface*.

The superiority of extempore prayer to a form, whether it be liturgical, or similar to that generally adopted by those who read a prayer at their family worship, does not, in our opinion, admit of a doubt. We are aware of the objections urged against extempore prayer in private, as well as in social and family worship; but whatever may be said of the incompetence of some, the folly of others, and the wild fanaticism or enthusiasm of a third class, who adopt the extempore method of prayer, their number bears no proportion to the vast multitude who are deluded into the belief that the prayers they read, cold, formal, and vain as the repetitions are, are all that is comprehended under the term devotion—and that a devout man is he who reads over from a printed book, or hears another read, a round of sabbatical or week-day prayers. In a word, in the great majority of instances a form of prayer tends to formality, while free prayer tends to excite thought, reflection, and we must add, where he who leads the prayers of the assembly is devout, devotion too. The rule in the former case we regard as erroneous, in the latter it is the exception which is wrong.

But we must proceed further to notice the works at the head of this article. "The Little Sanctuary" is, as the title intimates, "A Series of Domestic Prayers for morning and evening during four weeks, with some few other prayers for special occasions." The intellectual and highly talented author is ready to apologize for composing and publishing such a volume as the one before us. He says, "my only attempt is to assist those heads of households who cannot, or will not, offer free prayer. Where such a sweet task is performed, let not this, or any kindred manual, interrupt or supersede it! Compositions of the highest order, the noblest rituals, are imperfect substitutes for its ministration, and doubtful apologies for its neglect." Mr. Hamilton's volume has the

high recommendation of being most appropriate. There is nothing circuitous, parenthetical, involved, or recondite in these offices of devotion. The style is distinguished by simplicity and brevity, and is, moreover, rich in Scripture sentiment and quotation. The author has not only quoted with approbation the words of Addison, but has evidently composed the volume on the principles advocated by that elegant writer. Addison's words are, "How cold and dead does a prayer appear that is composed in the most elegant forms of speech, which are natural to our tongue, when it is not heightened by solemnity of phrase which may be drawn from the sacred writings. . . . I think we may say with justice, that when mortals converse with their Creator, they cannot do it in so proper a style as in that of the Holy Scriptures."

There is another excellence in these prayers. They are evangelical in the best sense of the word, rich in their expressions of affiance in the Saviour of lost man, they are equally full of the most humiliating confessions of sinfulness and unworthiness. All the offices of Christ—all the doctrines of the gospel—the regenerating influences of the Holy Spirit, and practical sanctification are never lost sight of. Some who mistake diffusive explication for perspicuity, and the utmost intensity of expression for intellectual strength, may, perhaps, object to these prayers as too sententious, and to the transitions also as too abrupt; but we confess that we prefer a style like Mr. Hamilton's, which leaves something to thought, and something to imagination, to that which only allows the mind passively to receive the thoughts and the sentiments of an author, as all that needs to be said, and all that can be said on any given topic. In one word, we prefer a writer who makes us think, to a writer who seems to imagine we can only follow the train of thought he marks out for us.

We give an extract from the first prayer in the volume.

"Lord of the Sabbath! who hast made it for man: who biddest its sun again to rise upon us: who causest all its blessings to return! Now therefore, our God, we thank thee and praise thy glorious name. Thou art the Creator who wouldest not rest until thy works were finished and shone forth very good. We commemorate this achievement of thy might and thy benevolence. We would declare thy doings among the people. But he who is our God, is the God of salvation: and a more illustrious deed do we now record. Thy Son who hath entered into his rest, hath ceased from his own works, as thou, O Father, didst from thine. We come not early to his tomb, but to his throne: not with embalmment of sweet spices for him who is dead, but we would sing praises, yea, we would sing praises to him who could not be holden of death, who could not see corruption, who dieth no more, who hath the power of an endless life. God hath gone up with a shout: the Lord with the sound of a trumpet. . . . We pray that this Sabbath may witness our conscientious attention to the duties of private religion: may we enter our closet and shut the door. Especially may we examine ourselves if we be in the faith. Amidst our domestic exercises may we be fervent in spirit and enlarged in heart. Let it be a Sabbath of the Lord in our dwelling. May we manifest the subdued cheerfulness, the unconstrained piety of a christian home. Save us from all admixture of trifling pursuit and intercourse with the divine obligations of the season. But as this day is peculiarly devoted to social public worship, may we be glad that it is said unto us, Let us go into the house of the Lord. Remember the Mount Zion in which thou hast dwelt. For our brethren and companions' sake we would now say, Peace be within thee."

We need not add that we most cordially recommend this volume to all who need a form of prayer for their domestic devotions.

The second volume on our list is a magnificent octavo of almost six hundred pages. There is a strange mixture of sectarian, political, and high church feeling in the preface. One portion of it appears designed to exhibit the numbers, wealth and influence of the members of the Established Church; another to conciliate the Wesleyans, whom the author regards as "presenting an important barrier between the church and her unreasonable foes," and a third to deprecate the separation of church and state. "Were there no state religion, the observance of the Sabbath, even as a day of rest from worldly labour, would, it is to be feared by many, be no longer continued; the poor would be denied the privilege of hearing the Gospel preached to them; a flood of immorality and irreligion would burst upon devoted England, and her honourable name would, ere long, cease to be respected among the nations."

Polemics are sadly out of place in a book of devotion; and if ever a minister of religion does wrong to intermeddle in politics, it certainly is when he writes a preface to a book of "Family Prayers for every Sabbath in the year." It is not extraordinary that those who contend for the mixture of religion with politics in the government of the realm, should blend politics with their devotions. But it is lamentable to see religion thus degraded, and piety almost neutralised, by their unscriptural alliance with those things which are merely secular. And we cannot close without saying that we have never yet met with a *political book of devotion*, written by a Dissenter; nor do we believe there is such a work in existence.

The Biblical Cabinet, Vols. XIII.—XIX. 12mo. Clarke. Edinburgh.

1. *Steiger's Exposition of the First Epistle of St. Peter.* 2 Vols.
2. *Lücke's Commentary on the Epistles of St. John.* 1 Vol.
3. *Umbreit's New Version of the Book of Job, with Expository Notes.* 2 Vols.
4. *Titman's Synonymes of the New Testament, &c. &c. &c. Vol. II.*

It is now some years since we bestowed a notice of any length on this series of works. It is therefore high time that we should report progress. The volumes which have appeared since our last review are, on the whole, quite equal to those with which the series commenced. They are, Tholuck's second volume on the Epistle to the Romans, his two volumes on the Sermon on the Mount, and the volumes which stand at the head of this article. There is not one of them better than Umbreit's Commentary on the Book of Job. Indeed, valuable as the various commentaries on the books of the *New Testament* are, we must confess we could wish that a larger portion of this series had consisted of works designed to illustrate the *Old*, on many of the books of which we have so little in the shape of profound criticism, (whether philological or historical,) in our own language.

For these reasons, the most valuable, decidedly, of the works at

the head of this article, is Umbreit on the Book of Job. It is not entirely free from the evils of the wide-spreading neology, which, like a subtle poison, diffuses itself over the whole body of German theology, and taints even those speculations, and those parts of Bible, which would appear to be too remotely connected with the doctrines at which the Rationalist points his most envenomed hostility, to be in any danger. Still it must be confessed that the Book of Job is, in a great measure, too well secured by this remoteness of connection to be much tampered with. Moreover, Umbreit himself is, we believe, by no means a Rationalist.

These observations, however, refer not so much to the translation, as to the introduction, in which, as is usual, our critic has his theory to support. He admits that Job was a really historical personage, and that the outline of his history corresponds with what is here laid down. So far, so good. But then he thinks, also, that the references to Satan, and the supernatural machinery of the piece throughout, are to be attributed solely to the invention of the poet. That this book, in fact, is a sublime dramatico-philosophical poem, composed, for the purpose of discussing the great question to which it refers, many ages after Job's death; as Professor Umbreit conjectures, by one of the Hebrew exiles, during the Babylonish captivity.

That the Book of Job does not profess to give us any more than the *substance* of the words of the interlocutors; that their speeches were not taken down with the exactness of a short hand report, may be true enough; that we have the real sentiments of the speakers is all that it is necessary to maintain. But to suppose that the whole is a poetical creation, except so far as the principal events of Job's life are concerned—in a word, that the speeches there recorded are no more, and in no other sense, his, than are those of *Œdipus*, in the *Œdipus Tyrannus* of Sophocles, appears to us a most gratuitous assumption. Moreover, that the preternatural events recorded in it are no more than a part of the machinery of a dramatic poem, we think equally gratuitous. Not that we suppose there would be any impropriety whatever in a sacred writer teaching us important truths by fiction. Many of the truths even of revelation are "truth severe in fiction drest." Witness the parables of our Lord. Our objections to such an hypothesis are founded on other reasons, and are very plain. There is a calm, sober, prosaic, historical narrative at the beginning of the book of Job, which adds nothing whatever to the dramatic proprieties of the piece, while it *does* seem intended to impress us with an idea of the reality of the events described. The whole air of the *narrative* parts is that of historical reality, and not of poetic fiction. As to the remaining parts, they are full indeed of the noblest poetry, the sublimest eloquence. But we believe, that whatever alterations, or even additions, may have been supplied for the sake of embellishment, and to give greater effect to them, the trains of argument there given were actually uttered by Job and his friends; and that the magnificent and unutterably sublime portions at the close, in which the Deity is introduced as speaking a language, and in accents

worthy of omnipotence, were the utterance of the Deity himself, and not the conception of a merely mortal imagination.

As to the frivolous controversies about the *form* of this book, (whether it be a history, or a poem, &c.) we reckon them of little moment. Even human compositions are so infinitely varied, that only the great classes can be discriminated, while many individual compositions may lie so close upon the borders of several classes, that we cannot say to which they belong. This is still more the case with Scripture, and especially with the book of Job. It embodies, in our opinion, the facts of a real history, thrown into something like an epic or dramatic form, and adorned by all that is imaginative and poetical.

As to the argument that it was written at a comparatively recent period, we must be permitted, notwithstanding what Professor Umbreit says, to adhere to the old hypothesis; that it is one of the most ancient books, if not the most ancient, of Hebrew literature. Every thing speaks inimitably the simplicity of the patriarchal age, to say nothing of the language itself. We detect none of those allusions, those incidental touches, which are sure to betray a fiction which, though relating to a very remote period, has been the fruit of a later age. Professor Umbreit, indeed, tells us that this only shows the exquisite skill of the poet. We reply, that it is not consistent with what we know to be the character of such species of fiction, nor with what we know of the powers of the human mind, to believe that such perfection of dramatic propriety could be maintained, as in no instance to leave traces of a later age. Besides, the language can hardly well be made to comport with any other period than that of hoar antiquity.

The translation is very ably effected. We have not had an opportunity of examining the German original, but we have no doubt that this is a faithful version. We were particularly pleased, (and took it for a mark of good taste in the translator,) to see that where the translation agrees with the common version, or a word has the same meaning, there is seldom an attempt to exchange or erase our vernacular Saxon for terms of Latinistic origin. This is the crying sin of commentators and translators. Their familiarity with a learned language makes them forget that our homely Saxon has twenty times the charm and power for the generality of readers, and that their object should be to translate every book of Scripture into those terms and in that form which will secure it the greatest power over the minds and imagination of the bulk of those who speak the language. It is an error into which Lowth and most other commentators and interpreters at all imbued with a classical spirit, have not unfrequently run; as though the cold elegance they so much admire, or the frigidities which seem (and they only seem) to secure a more classical beauty,—disembodied as they are of all living associations,—could ever make the same impression, or a hundredth part of it, as the homely terms of our vernacular.

We have here and there, indeed, observed the same error in the present translation, but still it is comparatively rare. Oh that commentators would lay it to heart—there will be no hope of removing

the prejudices of the people against a revision of the common version, while such a sad want of *taste* is found amongst scholars. We should be sorry to see the common version altered at all, except where the translation is erroneous. But in the Book of Job, and in many other parts of Scripture, it is frequently erroneous.

There is no portion of the word of God on which such a flood of light has been thrown of late years, or which has received so much illustration from the diligent prosecution of oriental literature, especially the Arabic, as the Book of Job. Accordingly, as might be expected, our common version of this book is about the most faulty (if we except one or two of the minor prophets) of the whole Scripture. In this little treatise of Umbreit the whole of the accumulations of modern learning are brought to bear on this book, and it is no small gratification to see a clear and perspicuous rendering, even though the reader may not derive any benefit from the crowded and deeply erudite notes. Let us give the reader the following specimens. There is here and there a word or phrase in which, in our opinion, the translator has departed needlessly from the common version; that is, where the meaning is the same. Let the reader try the effect of the two versions upon his ear, and, if we mistake not, he will, in most such cases, eschew the change.

We cannot do better than give the twenty-eighth chapter—in the former part one of the most difficult, and in the latter one of the most sublime, of the whole book.

CHAPTER XXVIII.

- " 1. Has the origin of silver been discovered,
Or the place of gold which is refined.
2. Iron is taken out of the dust,
And brass is extracted from stone.
3. Man maketh an end of darkness,
And thoroughly searcheth out the stone of
obscurity, and of the night of death.
4. A stream breaks forth by the side of the
stranger.
Lo there, how they whom the foot forsaketh,
Hang, and flit far from mankind.
5. Out of the earth springeth nourishment,
And beneath it is stirred up with fire.
6. The abode of the sapphire are the stones of
the earth,
And gold dust is found therein.
7. The path thither knoweth not the eagle,
And the eye of the vulture hath not seen it.
8. The fiercest hearts have not trodden it,
And the lion doth not traverse it.
9. He layeth his hand upon the stones,
And overturneth the mountains from their
roots.
10. He guideth rivers through the clefted rocks,
And his eye beholdeth every precious thing.
11. He stilleth the tears of the streams,
And bringeth to light that which is concealed.

12. Yet wisdom, where may she be found ?
And where is the place of understanding ?
13. The mortal knoweth not her value,
And she is not found in the land of the living.
14. The deep said, she is not in me,
And the sea said, she is not with me.
15. A golden treasure cannot be given for her,
And silver may not be weighed out as her value.
16. She cannot be weighed with the gold of Ophir,
With the precious onyx, and with the sapphire.
17. Gold and crystal cannot be equalled unto her,
Nor vessels of gold exchanged for her,
18. No mention may be made of coral, and crystal,
And the possession of wisdom is more than pearls.
19. The topaz of Cush cannot be held in equal esteem,
And she cannot be weighed with fine gold.
20. But wisdom, whence doth she come ?
And where is the place of understanding ?
21. She is hidden from the eyes of all living,
And covered from the fowls of heaven ;
22. The abyss and the realms of the dead declare,
We have only heard the report of her with our ears.
23. God understandeth the way to her,
And he knoweth her abode.
24. For he looketh to the end of the earth,
And he beholdeth whatever is under heaven.
25. As he layeth his weight upon the winds,
And determineth the waters with his measure.
26. As he prescribed his law to the rain,
And a path for the lightning of the thunder.
27. There did he see her and declare her,
He prepared her and searched her out.
28. But to man he said ‘ behold the fear of God, that is wisdom,
And to depart from evil, that is understanding.’ ”

To this we must add the twenty-ninth chapter, one of the most inexpressibly pathetic and beautiful to be found in all Scripture.

CHAPTER XXIX.

- “ 1. Job continued his discourse and said,
2. Oh, that it were to me as in the months that are past,
As in the days wherein God protected me.

- 3 When his lamp shone upon my head,
And I walked by his light, even in dark-
ness.
4. As the days were to me in my harvest
time,
While God abode yet as a friend in my tent.
5. While the Almighty was still with me,
And my children surrounded me ;
6. While in going, I washed my steps in
cream,
And near me the rock streamed forth with
oil.
7. When I went through the gate to the
city
And prepared my seat in the market-
place :
8. The young men saw me, and stepped
backwards,
The aged arose and remained standing.
9. Princes interrupted their speech
And in silence placed their hands on their
mouths.
10. The voices of the great ones were hushed,
And their tongues did cleave unto their
gums.
11. Yea, the ear which heard me blessed me,
And the eye which saw me bore witness
unto me.
12. For I delivered the poor that cried,
And the fatherless, who had none to help
him.
13. The blessing of the deserted came upon
me,
And I filled the widow's heart with joy.
14. Righteousness was my garment, and it
clothed me,
My justice covered me as a mantle and
head-dress.
15. I was the eye of the blind,
And the foot of the lame.
16. To the poor I was a father,
And I investigated the cause of the un-
known.
17. I brake the sharp biting of the wicked,
And I tore the prey from his teeth.
18. I said I shall die with my nest,
And multiply my days as the sand.
19. My roots shall ever be spread out to the
waters.
And the dew shall rest by night on my
branches.
20. My renown shall remain fresh with me,
And my bow shall be renewed in mine
hand.
21. They listened unto me and waited,
And were in still attention to my counsel.
22. After my words they kept silence,
For my discourse dropped down upon
them.

23. They waited for me as for the rain,
And they thirsted as for the rain of harvest.
24. I laughed at those who trusted not,
And they could not trouble the light of my countenance.
25. If their ways pleased me, I sat there as chief,
And seated myself as a king amidst their bands,
as a comforter among the mourners.

Lücke's work seems to be a very valuable commentary on the Epistles of John, and so is Steiger's on Peter. There are many things of which we cannot altogether approve; we can but give a general, but still decided recommendation. Tittman's work has been criticised in a preceding review. The second volume, though, alas! but a fragment, is well worthy of the first.

Cordially approving, as we do, of this series of works as a whole, we cannot refrain from expressing ourselves dissatisfied with the *style* in which some of the translators express themselves. In their prefaces, &c. there is frequently too much of the German idiom, and too little of the English. It is as though they had been too much in the habit of reading German, and too little in that of composing in English. This is especially the case with Mr. Thorleif Godmundson Repp, who, as the name is plainly German rather than English, seems to think only through a German medium. He has evidently caught, too, the same tone of mysticism which so much distinguishes the Germans. The longer we live the more do we admire their literature for many of its solid qualities; but the more also do we detest the following unhappy peculiarities so extensively characteristic of German authors; first, of expressing the most common place thoughts with an air of profundity,—making them swagger and look big; secondly, hiding in a mass of imposing words what has really no distinct meaning at all; and, lastly, indulging to excess in that love of philosophical speculation by which they are distinguished above any other people that have lived in modern times—founding important conclusions on the most slender and unsatisfactory premises. Of all these we shall give a short specimen from the short preface which, as translator, Mr. Repp has prefixed to his version of Lücke on the Epistles of John.

“ The views which are entertained respecting the nature and the very essence of divinity, and specially that branch of it which here is more immediately our object (Exegetics), are extremely various: these views differ, not merely according to the variety of sects into which the Christian community is now divided; but even within the limits of each sect we find these views multifariously modified. In a scientific survey, we may divide this endless variety of views into two grand classes; or rather, proceeding from a central point, or from a point at some distance from and within the two extremes, we instantly discover two diametrically opposite tendencies in these views; the one class of views has for its object the eternal and immutable preservation of something given or established; the other class of views scarcely recognises any thing beyond certain general principles, as eternally immovable or unalterably fixed. Opinions of the former class may not unsuitably be characterised as Conservative, and, speaking

typically, it is not improper to say that they are *crystallized*: those of the latter are progressive, variable, and *fermenting*.

"Theological views and opinions entertained in Germany are always of this latter class. A German school of divinity, whether embracing the principles of rationalism or of supernaturalism, whether orthodox or heterodox, whether neological or adhering to the ecclesiastical symbols; in short, of whatever denomination it may be, is in every case *progressive*, and, in its own sphere, of a *movement party*.

"The excuse for, or, we should rather say, the cause of this state of things with the Germans is, That, according to the estimation of *all parties* among them, theology is an *infinite, liberal, speculative, and transcendental science*, and not an *exact or mathematical science*; and being so conditioned, it, like all other speculative sciences, in its historical development, follows laws which are not of man's making or creation, but which he receives from above, exactly as he receives his mental and spiritual powers and faculties. According to this view, theology would be removed from its own sphere, and greatly degraded, by prescribing to it any bounds or limits, or by subjecting it to such laws as the exact sciences recognise, and ever ought to recognise. From this view it follows, that if we recognise two modes or forms of divine revelation, one *physical*, and the other *moral or special*, the problem, of analysing the whole of matter down to dynamical atoms, and of displaying all imaginable physical laws in a perfect system, is, as to magnitude, a very insignificant problem indeed, when compared with that other problem, which embraces the clear and perspicuous display of the moral relation existing between God and man.

"It is clear that, where theology is thus viewed, it may indeed be subject to an endless variety of changes in mode, form, and fashion; but it is equally clear, that the opinions of the vulgar can never have the slightest influence upon it. In all theological fashions in Germany, flocks and congregations must always follow their teachers, but can never take the lead. The Germans are thus completely secured against *gainseeking sectarianism*: Religion can, with them, never, in any shape, become an article of traffic. *And it also is altogether owing to this view of theology, as a sublime speculative science, that the German ecclesiastical establishments are so firmly secure, and so popular.*"

Now in some of these remarks we think there is not a little German obscurity; in one or two, meagre common-place is so expressed as to look like something formidably profound; while the conclusion of the whole is about as well borne out by the premises as that Tenterden Steeple was the cause of the Goodwin Sands. A grievously perverted theology has indeed been the result of the German license of speculation; but how the stability of their church establishments has been secured by it would puzzle any head but that of a German philosopher to determine. That Mr. Repp is a great admirer of establishments is very evident, though, by the bye, we may be allowed to say, that we hardly think it advisable to permit the translators of such works to express their opinions on this subject quite so loudly as Mr. Thorleif Godmundson Repp has done. The works, to our certain knowledge, are taken in as extensively by dissenters as by any class of churchmen in either of our establishments. It is merely as a matter of prudence that we suggest this; *verbum sat*. However, to resume our remarks; it is evident, first, that Mr. Godmundson Repp is a great admirer of church establishments; though what his admiration of any thing of the kind could have to do with a translation of the First Epistle of John we cannot well conceive; secondly, that he is also a great admirer of the license of speculation by which Germany is characterized, and,

being an admirer of both, nothing must satisfy him but he must find out some connection between them. That the permanency of establishments is owing to this spirit of restless speculation is a somewhat novel and paradoxical conclusion. Our friends of the English church, we have no doubt, would take a very different view of the matter. They would attribute the permanency of the *English Establishment* solely to the promptness and severity by which every symptom of innovation has been suppressed. A reasoner about as good as Mr. Repp (Mr. Rose), who met Pusey in arms, some years ago, on the subject of German theology, has attributed the licentious and ruinous spirit of German theological speculation to the want of an *episcopal* form of church government: another conclusion well worthy of the spirit of a German philosopher. In the mean time, it is very evident to any body of common sense, that the stability of the German establishments has little or nothing to do with the spirit which distinguishes their theological discussions.

We must be permitted, also, to make another observation; we think that the wretched introductions to one or two of these little volumes might as well have been omitted, or else translated into something like readable English. That of Steiger, on the Epistle of Peter, for example, is an insufferable piece of bombast. We are quite aware, indeed, that the German language will allow of a much more poetic *prose* style than our own. The conventional severities which here characterise prose are with them not so strict; though their very best writers are as chaste as ours, a writer may have much reputation with them, and yet indulge in a certain style of composition which would not be for a moment tolerated amongst us. It is possible that Mr. Steiger may be one of this stamp; still, in that case it becomes a translator of his work to soften these peculiarities. We have not seen the original, and therefore cannot say how far it justifies the extravagancies of the translation. We confess we think, however, that it must be chargeable with much bombast and false glitter. We have observed more than once, that the German commentator and philologist (than whom, when he is engaged in his proper business, there cannot be a more unimaginative person, or one more insensible to any thing like the ornaments of fancy or diction), is very apt to break out into the most extravagant flights of vicious eloquence when he is called to lay aside for a moment the duties of the mere commentator; as though the restraint habitually laid upon his imagination led him to resolve to take an ample revenge whenever he could; or as though, from being in the habit of stating, in the most prosy form, the most prosy matters of fact, he did not know how to use his imagination at all on those occasions in which some degree of liberty may be allowed it. But whatever may be the cause of this singular phenomenon, we have had frequent occasion to notice it amongst our continental theologians. We must justify our observations by a paragraph or two from this preposterous preface.

“The end to be gained by this is, not to lay the foundation of a new theological science,—that would succeed ill in the hands of this generation!—but only to awaken the giant which still slumbers in our church, that the winds of

heaven may sport themselves with his locks, and the spirits of earth may try to turn his spoils against himself.

"The stream of ages does, indeed, deposit the sand and mud of humanity, and sometimes overlay the shining rock of truth. But this living rock always raises itself higher and higher, because it is based in eternity, and throws back again the sand and the mud, which rest on no solid foundation."

We heartily wish success to the Biblical Cabinet; but cannot refrain from expressing a hope that we shall have more works on the Old Testament than we have hitherto had.

CRITICAL NOTICES.

The Solace of Song; short Poems suggested by Scenes visited on a Continental Tour. Seeley and Burnside.

THIS volume was originally published anonymously, but it is now understood to be the production of the Rev. Mr. Latrobe. It is a series of poems upon the associations that throng the Christian mind on an Italian tour, especially those derived from scenes connected with the sacred writings. Though these are few, for Italy is but on the verge of the field of Scripture narrative, yet it has some connecting links of a most interesting nature with the apostolic history. There is Puteoli, the very town where Paul abode seven days; the Appia Via along which he travelled; the Appii Forum where the Roman brethren greeted him at the Three Taverns; and in the Eternal City the christian visitor is reminded, by the Arch of Titus, of Judea's overthrow, and by the now desolate coliseum, of the martyrs who became "a spectacle to men and to angels," of patient endurance to the death for the faith of Christ, within its walls. These, and other associations, form the material of this volume, which is beautifully printed, and illustrated with twelve sketches, which are perfect gems of art. We do not select the following poem because it is the best, but on account of its dimensions rendering it suitable to extract:—

"The Appian Way.

"And so we went toward Rome, and from thence, when the brethren heard of us, they came to meet us as far as Appii Forum, and the Three Taverns, whom, when Paul saw, he thanked God and took courage.—Acts xxviii. 14, 15.

How strong the Love, that binds
Two souls in Friendship's bonds, when days are young,
And Hope her web of fairy beauty winds,
And Joy flits by with carols on her tongue;
And not a cloud of care obscures the skies!
— Yet Passion soon, too soon, an entrance finds,
And Friendship dies.

How strong a lover's love,
When youth and beauty lean upon his arm,
Whispering soft things from softer thoughts that rove
O'er scenes, all blooming 'neath Spring's golden charm!
— Yet Time's rude wing and wintry blasts rush by,
And falcon Death swoops on the fairest dove,
Nor heeds it cry.

How strong a mother's clasp,
Her frail babe round, when dangers hover near!
She shuns nor fang of beast, nor tongue of asp,

Fire, flood, nor storm,—disease, woe, want, nor fear,
That roam along, like wolves upon the wild;
— Yet may a mother loose her fondest grasp,
And spurn her child!

Yea! Time and busy Death,
And seeds of sin that in men's bosoms lie,
Striking their cancerous roots with every breath,
Flushing the cheek, and firing fierce the eye.—
O how with earth-born love they roughly deal,
Till, back retiring to its source beneath,
It cease to feel!

Yet there's a love beyond
All love of earth—that lives, and rears its head
When Love and Friendship bow beneath Time's wand,
And all a mother's dear delights have fled—
That Sin may not defile, nor years corrode,
Nor e'en the arm of Death unloose—a bond
Close knit by God!

Stronger than Earth and Hell,
The cords that drew Paul's brethren on their way,
The friend to meet unknown, yet known so well,
As the sweet impulse wrought its secret sway:
Self had not wove the knot, and could not part,
Hand linked to hand by a celestial spell,
And heart to heart.

And *this* the road they sped,
Mingling sweet converse with affection's tear;
While Peace and Joy their hallowed influence shed—
Spurning all pain, shame, lassitude, or fear
Of coming trial:—Why should they complain,
Who favoured are to bleed where Jesus bled,
With him to reign?

Each had his office then:
The *one* as bound with Christ, the cross to bear,
And gather graces in the lion's den;
The *rest*, in his vicissitudes to share—
Nor *they* alone, for Faith, amid the throng,
— O grace unmerited by sinful men;
Saw Jesus move along!"

Scripture Lessons, or the History of our Lord, in Question and Answer. Designed for the Use of Bible Classes. By Mrs. Henderson. Two Volumes. 18mo. pp. 340—406. London: Hamilton, Adams, and Co.

THIS valuable compendium of the evangelical history was originally published in parts; and in our Magazine for October, 1836, we noticed, with commendation, the first and second numbers, and supplied our readers with several passages of the preface, explanatory of the plan upon which it is constructed. We are now happy to have it complete in two convenient volumes, comprising the whole course of our Lord's life and ministry, all the important facts of which are brought out and explained with much perspicuity and force by the pointed interrogations which the gifted authoress has proposed.

As a specimen will best illustrate the nature of this work, we extract a passage on the 24th verse of the 23rd chapter of Matthew.

"24. How did our Lord further reprove these unrighteous characters? "Ye blind guides, which strain at a gnat, and swallow a camel." Why are the

Scribes and Pharisees called "blind guides?" See ver. 16. What is the sense of that phrase, ye "strain at a gnat?" Ye strain your liquor, to avoid swallowing a gnat. Did the Jews do this? Yes. Why were they so particular as to strain their drink before swallowing it? Because flies were accounted unclean. Was the camel also among those creatures accounted unclean? Yes. What was the distinction between clean and unclean animals? See vii. 6. What kind of an animal is the camel, in size and nature? A large, patient, and useful animal. Was it not much too bulky to be swallowed? Yes. How, then, are we to understand our Lord's saying, ye "swallow a camel?" It is a proverbial expression. What does it mean? That they did not scruple to commit great sins. Explain the whole of this proverbial saying, To "strain at a gnat and swallow a camel." It signifies to be very exact in observing the lesser duties of religion; and, at the same time, to break the great commandments of the law."—pp. 219, 220.

There is an index of subjects affixed to the second volume, which will assist the reader in referring to many valuable explanations of the terms employed by the Evangelists.

We can confidently recommend this work to the public, as a useful assistant in family instruction, and a valuable guide for Bible classes.

A Brief Memoir of Sir William Blizard. Knt. F.R.S. L. & E., Surgeon and Vice-President of the London Hospital, read before the Hunterian Society, October 7th, 1835, with additional Particulars of his Life and Writings. By William Cooke, Member of the Royal College of Surgeons, Secretary to the Hunterian Society, &c. &c. London: Longman and Co. pp. 67.

SIR WILLIAM BLIZARD was one of those successful individuals, who, unaided, perhaps, by extraordinary talents, have risen from a humble origin to a station of considerable importance and usefulness. Throughout his long life, which was protracted to the period of ninety-two years, he was distinguished by diligence in the attainment of professional knowledge, by activity and success in communicating to his pupils the knowledge which he had obtained, and by assiduity and kindness in employing it for the benefit of the afflicted. It was evidently Sir William's delight to diminish the sum of human misery; a delight which reflects an honour on the character, which the highest scientific attainments, unattended by benevolence and sympathy, can never confer. In common with many distinguished practitioners of the healing art, Sir William was free from the disregard to the truths and duties of religion, which has been the reproach of the medical profession. "I rejoice," says Mr. Cooke, "to say, that our late venerable friend was not of that class of the faculty, who delude themselves into the belief (or seem to act under the delusion) that attendance on the sick, though not in all cases imperatively needed on the Sabbath, or, at least, not in the hours appropriated to divine worship, affords an apology for habitual neglect of the ordinances of religion. Medical men live in the midst of scenes so appalling and affecting, and are so habituated to think of their resources for relieving others, that they are apt to overlook the lesson inculcated on themselves. No class of men are so accustomed to deduce principles from facts, in hope of mitigating the woes of others; and none, perhaps, are more remiss in the application of their inductive philosophy, so as to derive the moral advantages, which the solemn monitions they daily receive are well adapted to impart." "I will not venture," says Mr. Cooke, in a subsequent passage, "on the difficult and delicate task of endeavouring to ascertain to what extent Sir William aimed, in the regulation of his thoughts and affections, and in the performance of his duties to conform himself to the will of Almighty God as revealed in holy writ, and sought the salvation offered to a fallen world through faith in the divine and adorable Redeemer. But it is a source of high satisfaction, that his oral testimony was against every approach to materialism, that his writings abound with pious allusions to the attributes and providence of God; that he delighted to

point out the wonderful proofs of design in the conformation of the human body; that he was habituated to remark the wonderful processes of nature, and ready to ascribe them to nature's God; that he regarded and read the sacred book of revelation, as well as the volume of nature ever spread open around him; that he attended public worship; and that he went about doing good." "Sir William carried his designs for the good of the inmates of hospitals higher than in merely aiming to heal diseases, and administer to the comfort of mind and body. He sought their moral improvement, and recommended that advantage should be taken of the favourable opportunity of pointing out their duty to God and their neighbour. Well knowing that many of the patients could not leave their wards to attend the chapel, he inculcated the propriety of having divine service performed, every week, in every ward, as well as in the chapel on the Sunday."

Mr. Cooke has produced a pleasing and an instructive memoir of his venerable friend.

The Parent's Guide to a Liberal and Comprehensive Education; containing a copious selection of Questions, affording the Means of minute Examination on the Works of Creation, English Grammar, History, Geography, Astronomy, Logic, Arithmetic, Mathematics, Chemistry, and Natural Philosophy; also an extensive Selection of Exercises in Algebra and Mathematics, given at several Examinations of Colebrooke House Academy, by the late Dr. Ritchie, of the London University. By the Rev. Robert Simpson, M.A. Islington.

THE questions of which Mr. Simpson's work is principally composed we cannot but regard as valuable in many respects. They point out the varied and interesting fields of knowledge over which the youthful mind may be conducted. They are all of a kind adapted to awaken and to lead to farther inquiry. They comprise the elements of those sciences by which the faculties of the human mind have been most expanded. They have the great excellence of directing the attention of the young to the word, as well as to the works of God. They may be exceedingly useful to parents, in assisting them to ascertain the progress of their children; and they furnish many excellent hints to teachers, with regard to the topics which may be advantageously introduced into a course of education, and those parts of chemistry, astronomy, and natural philosophy which are level to the capacity of the young.

Humble Benevolence: or the Life of William Shawcroft. By Rev. C. Stovell. 18mo.

AN interesting Narrative of a poor, but pious and most useful Christian. The success of his labours in his village Sunday schools was truly astonishing, and is well and succinctly described by his biographer.

THE EDITOR'S TABLE.

Christian Beneficence contrasted with Covetousness; illustrating the Means by which the World may be regenerated. By Thomas Dick, LL.D. Second Edition. Ward and Co. London.

Friendly Counsels; addressed to various Characters, in Twenty Familiar Letters. London: Religious Tract Society.

Christian Principles taught and explained, in a Familiar Dialogue. Ward and Co. London.

Ten Sermons on the Power and Grace of Christ, and on the Evidences of his Glorious Gospel. By P. Doddridge, D.D. London: Religious Tract Society.

Celestial Scenery, or the Wonders of the Planetary System displayed. By Thomas Dick, LL. D. Third Thousand, revised. Ward and Co. London.

Bible Thoughts, extracted from Caryl. London: W. Ball.

Nature, the Preacher of Christianity. London: Houlston and Co. Paternoster Row.

Dissertations on unaccomplished Prophecy. By W. Snell Chauncy. Nisbet and Co. London.

The New Excitement; or a Book to induce Young People to read, for 1839. Hamilton and Co. London.

The Wonders of Geology, By Gideon Mantell, LL.D. F.R.S. 2 vols. 8vo. London: Relfe and Fletcher.

The Trumpet Blown; or an Appeal to the Society of Friends. By Isaac Crewdson. 12mo. London: Hamilton and Co.

LITERARY INTELLIGENCE.

WORKS IN THE PRESS, OR IN PROGRESS.

We have received *proposals* for publishing by *subscription* about Forty Charges and other Discourses of the late Rev. Robert M'All, LL.D., of Manchester. These volumes, we are glad to perceive, are to be edited by the intimate and eminent friend of the deceased, the Rev. Dr. Wardlaw, of Glasgow, who will furnish a Biographical Notice of the lamented author. We trust, however, the work will not be restricted to his pulpit compositions. Dr. M'All was an eminently gifted and useful correspondent, and a selection from his epistolary communications, as well as from his other literary remains, such as Dr. Wardlaw would make, we believe, would greatly increase the attractiveness of the publication, and reveal to those readers who did not know that lamented minister, a more complete view of his mind and heart than they can obtain from his public Discourses alone. We should have thought it unnecessary to solicit *subscriptions* for such a work. We wish it, however, the widest circulation, not only for the benevolent purposes of aiding the Doctor's family, but for the advantage of diffusing the opinions it will contain, dressed, as they are, by his genius in a highly attractive form.

Just published, in one vol. fcp. 8vo. *Reminiscences of South America*, from two and a half year's residence in Venezuela. By John Hawkshaw, F.G.S. Member of the Institution of Civil Engineers.

In the press.—On the Law of Christ respecting Civil Obedience, especially in the Payment of Tribute, with an Appendix of Documents and Notes; to which are added, Two Addresses on the Voluntary Church Question. By John Brown, D.D. Minister of the United Associate Congregation, Broughton Place, Edinburgh, and Professor of Exegetical Theology to the United Secession Church. The Third Edition, improved and enlarged. Of this work, which, besides an exposition of Romans xiii. 1—7, on the principle of strict Exegesis, contains a discussion of the questions so important in themselves, and, at the present moment so peculiarly interesting, respecting the nature and limits of civil obedience—the exercise of civil power in reference to religion—the right of resistance—the limitation of the law of tribute, especially as affecting Church Taxes, &c. &c. two Editions have been disposed of in Scotland in a few months. This subject has a strong claim on the attention of English Dissenters at the present crisis. The Third Edition is so much enlarged as to be in a good measure a new work. It will form an octavo volume.

TRANSACTIONS OF THE CONGREGATIONAL CHURCHES, AT HOME AND ABROAD.

PRIZE ESSAYS ON LAY AGENCY IN HOME MISSIONARY OPERATIONS.

We have much pleasure in announcing that the Rev. James Bennett, D.D., the Rev. Joseph Fletcher, D.D., and Joshua Wilson, Esq. have kindly undertaken the office of adjudicators on the merits of the Essays, and the award of the Prizes, pursuant to the offer already advertised in connexion with the Congregational Union of England and Wales, that One Hundred Guineas will be given for the best Essay, and Twenty-five Guineas for the Essay second in merit, on the Employment of Christian Brethren not entirely devoted to the Ministry, in Efforts for the Spread of the Gospel in our Native Country. A third umpire was appointed at the suggestion and desire of the Donor of the principal Prize, on the ground that as the Essays are to relate more particularly to plans for the activities and labours of our lay brethren, it might be advantageous and satisfactory that they should pass under the review of some well-informed and competent lay gentleman; as it is probable, that in judging of their merits, considerations might present themselves to the mind of an intelligent layman, which would not occur to ministers, who view the subject from a different position, and therefore, possibly, in a somewhat different light.

PLAN FOR HOME MISSIONARY OPERATIONS, IN CONNEXION WITH THE CONGREGATIONAL UNION OF ENGLAND AND WALES.

By the fifth resolution of the last Annual Assembly of the Union, the Committee "are earnestly desired to give immediate attention for devising some plan by which this Union might promote Home Missionary efforts, in harmony with other organizations at present existing among our churches for the same purpose; and to submit the plan, as soon as it is prepared, to the several County Associations for their judgment and suggestions."

In pursuance of this instruction, the Committee have sketched the following plan, which, with the explanatory remarks that accompany it, they respectfully submit to the consideration of their brethren. They earnestly hope it will be so entertained as to promote the most vigorous efforts in this all-important field of labour; and to direct them in the most safe and successful course.

General Introductory Observations.

1. The necessity of more vigorous Home Missionary Efforts by British Churches of all Denominations, is beginning to be strongly felt, as it must be by every one who duly considers either the vast amount of irreligion in our country, or the relatively feeble and ineffectual efforts hitherto made for the salvation of the multitudes of our irreligious countrymen.

2. The desire that the Congregational Union should be brought to co-operate vigorously in this great work, seems to be strong and universal among its friends and supporters.

3. This is strictly the primary object of the Union, as declared in its constitution; viz. "to promote the spread of the Gospel in connexion with the distinctive principles of our churches,"—"to promote the spread of the Gospel," the first object of every association of believers; to promote its spread in "*connexion with the distinctive principles of our churches*," because it is the conviction of the friends of the Union that those distinctive principles are in a new and vital manner connected with the purity and power of our holy religion.

4. The Congregational Union is never likely to exert its full beneficial influence on our own denomination, but in connexion with efforts to spread the Gospel, and multiply our churches.

5. It is evident that the Union cannot enter on Home Missionary labours, but in connexion with the County and District Associations; but its action with, and through them, may be equally beneficial and delightful. It may promote the vigour and unity of all their efforts; it may give needful aid to the feeble districts; it may assist by delegation at their public meetings, and produce, in relation to our churches, and their Home Missions, the same salutary and stimulating influence exerted in a similar way by the Parent Bible, Tract or Missionary Societies on their several auxiliaries and branches.

6. In considering the whole question of Home Missions, as it presents itself to view at this time,—the vast amount of ignorance and irreligion, and of false doctrine, ruinous to the souls of men, now prevailing in our country—the formidable obstacles to Home Missionary efforts in general, and especially to those of our churches, presented by the social, political, and ecclesiastical state of the country—the feeble character, and unsatisfactory results of Home Missions hitherto—the affecting and deep apathy as to religion, of immense numbers of our countrymen of all ranks—it seems impossible not to conclude that a much higher order of mental and moral energy, than has been as yet employed in this all-important work, is indispensable to success in it; and that to obtain that higher order of agency, should be the first thing proposed and sought in any new efforts in this arduous field of labour.

PLAN, in accordance with the foregoing statements, for HOME MISSIONARY OPERATIONS, IN CONNEXION WITH THE CONGREGATIONAL UNION OF ENGLAND AND WALES, respectfully submitted by the Committee of the Union, to the associations, pastors, and brethren of the churches for their judgment and suggestions.

1. Funds. To be raised primarily by subscriptions or collections of churches. Each church approving the plan, and uniting for the object, to subscribe annually two, five, or ten pounds according to their respective ability and liberality; or to make an annual church collection. Other contributions, in any form in which they may be attainable, to be added; but subscriptions or collections of churches to be the basis of the plan, and the primary support of the Society.

2. Application of the Funds to be, first, for the support of evangelists, who shall be the most devoted and energetic servants of Christ, it may please the Great Head of the Church to raise up, and whose support shall be adequate to their standing and services in the churches. Secondly, for the aid of our weaker churches and associations in their Home Missionary efforts.

3. Employment of the evangelists shall be, first, in preaching tours and visits for Home Missionary efforts wherever Providence shall open a door of opportunity. Secondly, in attending, whenever desired, public meetings of associations, or of Home Missionary Societies, to communicate intelligence, excite zeal, and secure co-operation.

4. Constitution and management of proposed Society. Its name to be "BRITISH HOME MISSIONARY SOCIETY," in connexion with the "CONGREGATIONAL UNION OF ENGLAND AND WALES." Its connexion with the Union to be established and regulated in the same manner as in the case of the Colonial Mission. Every member of a subscribing church, and every personal subscriber and donor to be a member of the Society, and entitled to vote at its general meetings. Its declared and defined OBJECT to spread the Gospel within the bounds of the Union, in accordance with the doctrine and discipline of Independent churches. Its management to be confided to a committee and officers annually chosen by the general meeting of the members of the Society.

The whole plan, when matured, to be submitted to a public meeting for the sanction of the churches, and for the formation of the Society, to be held on the evening of the Monday in May next, preceding the day of the Annual Assembly of the Congregational Union of England and Wales.

Explanatory Observations.

Some additional remarks, intended to explain and recommend the principal features of the foregoing plan, may not be without use. In regard to the proposal that subscriptions or collections on the part of churches, in their church capacity, should form at once the primary source from which pecuniary contributions for the Home Missionary efforts of the Union are to be derived; and the basis of the constituency under whose ultimate authority they are to be conducted; it may be remarked that such an arrangement is in immediate and obvious harmony with the constitution of the Union itself, as a fellowship of churches. It may be further observed that our churches, as such, have not yet been specially appealed to for efforts in aid of the spread of the Saviour's kingdom. They have borne their part in the great public institutions of the day, as a portion of the general community, on the same grounds and terms with others. Their standing, profession, and obligations, as churches of Christ, have not been made the ground of direct and special appeals to them, as being under stronger bonds of duty than others to aid in this great work. It has not been made to be felt, as it might have been, that christian churches are gathered to be not only communities where divine ordinances should be administered, the faithful edified, and gospel truth professed and preserved; but also bodies charged with the office and duty of propagating that Gospel to the utmost extent of the opportunity and ability given them by their Great Head. Let it be observed that this is not advanced to condemn what has been already done in the formation or support of Societies for the spread of the Gospel, or to insinuate a desire of alteration in the plans now in operation for these objects, but rather to show that one interesting and scriptural mode of awakening the sympathies and efforts of professing Christians has, till now, remained unattempted, and stands open for adoption by a body, and for an object, to which it is peculiarly appropriate. An appeal to our churches to be the prime movers in an effort for the spread of the Gospel in our own country, and the chief, not the only, supporters of it, by the Congregational Union of England and Wales, cannot but be legitimate and effectual. Let this be especially the effort of our churches. Other aid will not be the less, but the more willingly given, when it is seen that those on whom the first obligation rests, have taken the foremost place in zeal and liberality. It is also submitted that if, when a church is assembled, as a separated community, to enjoy its own privileges and fellowship, the members were tenderly and solemnly reminded of their peculiar character, professions, and mercies; and on these considerations an appeal were made to them, above and before others, to give and to do for the coming of Christ's kingdom—it would fall with salutary power on their hearts; and a method comparatively new and untried, would be adopted to help forward objects, for the advancement of which, all the legitimate appliances we can employ, are found to be but too few, and too inadequate.

With respect to the proposal for obtaining, if possible, the services in itinerant labours, of an order of agents for Home Missionary work, of superior gifts and qualifications—evangelists who might visit for tours of occasional preaching, various districts peculiarly destitute; or in which the hope of success in such efforts might be most encouraging; or where the pastors and churches might desire their services—this feature of the plan will, it may be hoped, commend itself more strongly to the judgments of the brethren the more it is considered. That the state of our country requires the application of more vigorous means than have been hitherto employed, is most obvious. Not that present means have been altogether without fruit, or that they should be superseded and discontinued; but that in addition to them, in aid of them, this also should be attempted. For were some powerful, gifted preachers to visit periodically or occasionally destitute localities of our towns, or of our country districts, and put forth the utmost efforts of consecrated zeal and talent on behalf of the neglected and perishing, what interest and attention might be awakened! how many souls might be converted! what a salutary impulse might be imparted to the zeal of

our pastors and churches! what encouragement might be afforded to many of our home missionaries toiling amidst difficulty and obscurity, contending almost in vain with either the stagnant torpor, or the active opposition prevailing all around them! If the days and the triumphs of Whitfield and Wesley cannot be repeated, some inferior measure of the same glorious power and impulse may be obtained. Great difficulties are no doubt in the way. Where shall we find the men? If Christ raise them up, we shall find them. We may hope they will be given if we ask them; and be found if we seek them. One thing is certain, if we make no beginning, no effort, deliverance may come from some other quarter, but the labour, the honour, the reward will not be ours. Some of our most energetic, gifted brethren, could they be adequately sustained, might think such a course of effort as that now under consideration, the most honourable and attractive to which they could devote their constant or occasional labour. Without either undervaluing or disturbing the settled order of our churches, and the regular labours of our pastors, it is surely possible to prosecute aggressive enterprises—yea, to give those aggressive efforts a safe and steady direction by connecting them with the established economy of our churches; and, through the same connexion, to infuse by our discursive movements, new life and warmth into our well-ordered ecclesiastical households of the faithful.

Another point connected with this proposed plan for Home Missionary efforts in connexion with the Union, requiring notice, is the effect it might have on our district Associations, and the co-operation with them without which it cannot even be attempted. As far as the plan could influence or affect them, it must be to make them more completely, or at least more actively, home missionary bodies. Nothing could be more promotive of their usefulness and value than this. They would come into correspondence with the committee and officers of the Home Missionary branch of the Union. The evangelists, or other brethren, as delegations from that central body, might attend, when desired, at the annual meetings of the Associations, to communicate intelligence, promote co-operation, and awaken zeal. All the advantages derived from a similar connexion and correspondence with the parent institutions, by branch associations in aid of missions, or of Bible distribution, would thus be realized by the County Associations as united and corresponding in the proposed organization for Home Missions. Then the feebler associations and those in whose districts the most extensive itinerant efforts are required, might be aided by occasional grants to be expended on their own operations, and at their own discretion. Candour would seem to require the acknowledgment that our associations in general much need such an impulse as might be thus, in the safest and most beneficial manner, communicated. Efforts for the world would thus re-act on the churches: and as already in a thousand instances, so also in this, it would be found that the union and prosperity of the church will be more effectually promoted by proceedings and efforts for the spread of the gospel, than by any other means whatever.

It only remains to commend the whole proposed arrangements to the candid and prayerful consideration of the pastors and brethren of our churches. If the brethren will think and pray over the object, and the means proposed for its accomplishment; if they will in the freest manner, fraternally express by letter, by conference, or in print, what is approved, what is deemed objectionable, what may be with advantage altered—then a service will be done to those with whom this plan originated, at the expressed wish of the last annual assembly of the Union, and who will be most happy that their labours should be by any hand improved—and, what is of far more importance, the evangelization of our own country may be in some not inconsiderable measure promoted, an object at the present moment second in importance to none of all the diversified purposes of benevolence pressing their claims on the attention of the Congregational Churches.

CONGREGATIONAL SCHOOL, LEWISHAM, KENT.

The annual examination of the children in this establishment took place on Wednesday, 27th June last, before the Rev. Drs. Henderson and Halley, of Highbury College. Although the weather was unfavourable, a numerous company of subscribers and friends assembled, and appeared highly gratified. Master Thomas Islip, of Stamford, Lincolnshire, one of the boys leaving the school, read an essay, which was greatly admired, as affording hope of future attainments; and the pupils, (of whom there were forty,) were very suitably addressed on the distribution of the prizes, by Dr. Halley, and Choo Tih Lang, the Chinese convert, who was present, and appeared greatly interested with the exercises of the day. The following is the Report of the Examiners:

"The undersigned, having conducted the examination of the pupils in the Congregational School, have much pleasure in bearing their testimony to the proficiency of the scholars and assiduity of the masters of that institution. The instruction, both literary and religious, has been communicated in such a manner as should secure the confidence of the subscribers in the present management of the school. After a prolonged and careful inquiry into various departments of education, the Examiners are enabled to congratulate the friends of the establishment upon the satisfactory and promising position in which it is now placed."

NEW CHAPEL, ASHTON KEYNES, WILTS.

On Tuesday, the 7th of August, 1838, a small but neat chapel, in connection with the Congregational denomination, was opened at Ashton Keynes, in the County of Wilts. Sermons were preached on the occasion by the Rev. John Burder, A.M., of Stroud; the Rev. Benjamin Rees, of Chippenham; and the Rev. Eliezer Jones, of Rodborough Tabernacle. The Rev. Messrs. Hooper, of C. Malford; — Jones, of Trelech; — Lush, of Calne; — Cullen, of Fairford; and — Palmer, of Clack, conducted the devotional part of the service. There was a goodly attendance of neighbouring ministers.

On the following Sabbath, the Rev. David Williams, of Kingwood, preached in the morning and evening. The congregations were numerous and respectable.

This sanctuary is erected on a piece of free land, given by Mr. John Fry, of Minely, in compliance with the request of his deceased father, the late Mr. Richard Fry, of Ashton Keynes, and is regularly invested in trustees for the use of the Independent denomination. It will seat 150 persons; there is in connection with it a christian church, consisting of 11 members, and a Sunday-school, of 100 scholars, and 14 gratuitous teachers, who have been made a blessing to the neighbourhood in the christian education of the young. Ashton Keynes is a large and populous village, containing about 1000 inhabitants, and presents an interesting sphere of usefulness to the minister who occupies it, in connection with Cricklade, a town four miles distant.

The debt incurred by the erection of this place of worship is from two to three hundred pounds, of which more than one hundred pounds has been already contributed. Much thankfulness is felt to those who have given of their abundance to this infant cause, and any who may please to assist, are respectfully solicited to forward their contributions to the Editor, at the Publishers, who will cheerfully forward the same to the trustees.

HARRISON ROAD CHAPEL, HALIFAX.

This place of worship originated in the withdrawalment of about fifty members from the Old Square Chapel, who were kindly accommodated by the commissioners with the use of the Court House, as a temporary place of worship. Shortly after the secession they were formed into a separate christian church, upon strictly Congregational principles, by the Rev. R. W. Hamilton, of Leeds; and on the 16th of August, 1836, the foundation stone of a new chapel, for their use, was laid in Harrison Road by that gentleman. On the 19th of July, 1837, the chapel was opened for divine service, when the Rev. R. W. Hamilton; the Rev. John Harris, of Epsom; and the Rev. John Cockin, of

Holmfirth, preached on the occasion. The collections, at the opening, amounted to £400. 12s.; and the sums previously subscribed, to £1050. On the 29th of July, this year, the first anniversary was held; and after sermons by the Rev. Professor Vaughan, D.D., of University College, and the minister of the chapel, the sum of £318. 12s. was added to the former collections.

On Wednesday, Aug. 22, the Rev. John M. Obery, M.A. late of Highbury College and the University of Glasgow, was solemnly ordained pastor of the new church and congregation, when the Rev. James Pridie, of Halifax, introduced the services in the usual way; the Rev. John Cockin explained the principles of Independency; the Rev. R. W. Hamilton proposed the customary questions, and offered the ordination prayer; and the Rev. Ralph Wardlaw, D.D., of Glasgow, gave the charge. In the evening, the Rev. John Ely, of Leeds, preached the sermon to the people.

The chapel at Harrison Road is a handsome and spacious building, capable of accommodating about 1000 persons, and the congregation is gradually increasing under the young minister's care. The present state and prospects of the place are truly gratifying, for which both pastor and people desire to "thank God and take courage."

THE FOUNDATION OF A NEW CHAPEL AT RAMSGATE, KENT.

Ebenezer Chapel, which was erected in 1743, having been found altogether inadequate to accommodate the increased attendance both of inhabitants and visitors, it was resolved, a year ago, that the old chapel should be removed, and a new and spacious edifice erected upon the site, and some freehold ground adjoining, which had been purchased for that purpose. Thursday, Sept. 20th, was appointed for laying the foundation-stone, which interesting ceremonial took place at 11 o'clock. A large congregation having assembled, the service commenced with singing, after which, the Rev. John Blackburn, of Pentonville, London, delivered an introductory address, reviewing the past history of the church, and proclaiming the principles to which the future edifice would be devoted.

The venerable Mrs. Townley, mother of the Rev. H. Townley, and of Dr. C. Townley, now in her 87th year, supported by her son, one of the county magistrates, and another member of her family, then proceeded to lay the foundation-stone, with the customary ceremonies. The Rev. Mr. Bevis, the pastor, then offered a solemn and appropriate prayer; after which, a doxology was sung, and the assembly separated. In the evening Mr. Blackburn preached at the Baptist Chapel, which was kindly lent for the occasion. The attendance was large and respectable, and the collections throughout the day exceeded £80. We hope to present our readers with a more detailed account of this interesting church in a future number.

ORDINATION.

On Tuesday, the 28th of August, the Rev. E. Davies, late Student at Rotherham College, was ordained to the pastoral office over the Independent Church, worshipping at the Tabernacle Chapel, Stockport.

In the morning the Rev. N. K. Pugsley, of Stockport, introduced the service by reading suitable portions of scripture and prayer. The Rev. J. Turner, of Knutsford, gave a clear and candid statement of the Independent view of the nature and discipline of a christian church. The Rev. R. Fletcher, of Manchester, proposed the usual questions, which were answered in a satisfactory manner; after which the call of the church for Mr. Davies to become their pastor was renewed by the congregation, and publicly accepted by Mr. Davies. Then (in the absence of the Rev. T. Smith, M.A., of Rotherham College, whose presence was prevented by indisposition,) the Rev. J. Adamson, of Charlesworth, proceeded to offer up the ordination prayer, with the imposition of hands. The charge to the newly ordained minister was delivered by the Rev. J. J. Carruthers, of Liverpool; it was founded on 2 Tim. ii. and distinguished alike by its evangelical tone, and the affectionate and impressive manner in which it was delivered.

At the close of the service the ministers and other friends dined together; after which the usual interchange of sentiments took place. One of the Wesleyan Methodist ministers present, in a manner highly creditable to his feelings, expressed his approbation of the charge which had been delivered, by moving that Mr. Carruthers be requested to publish it, which was seconded by another minister of the same connexion.

In the evening the congregation again assembled in the chapel, when the Rev. J. Waddington, of Stockport, introduced the service, and the Rev. Dr. Raffles, of Liverpool, addressed the church and congregation in his usually eloquent and powerful manner, from a part of the 10th verse of the 6th chapter of Galatians—"The household of faith."

The Rev. C. Baker, (Baptist,) J. Bennett, of Hatherlow, and S. Heeley, of Hazel Grove, took part in the devotional exercises of the day. About thirty ministers were present, and the spacious chapel, both morning and evening, was crowded with attentive and devout congregations.

The Tabernacle, we understand, is the oldest dissenting interest in the town, having existed for nearly 150 years. It will be recollected, that their last minister, the Rev. S. Ashton, died about two years ago, after having presided over that cause for upwards of thirty years. We cannot but rejoice in the auspicious circumstances under which Mr. Davies appears to commence his ministry, and wish him and the church continued prosperity.

ANSWERS TO CORRESPONDENTS, &c.

Favours have been received from the Rev. Drs. Shoveller—Hoppus—Bennett—Rev. Messrs. D. E. Ford—W. Walford—George Rose—J. M. Obery—Thomas Milner—R. Elliott—R. Burls—James Turner—J. Kelly—Joseph Morison—J. J. Hemmings—Eben. Davies—T. Edkins—Wm. Owen.

Also from W. Stroud, Esq. M.D.—Messrs. Charles Mears—W. White—J. T. Poole—Robert Joyce—A. S. Braden—A Suburban Pastor.

We beg most respectfully to intimate to our Correspondents, that we are always happy to receive and insert *original* religious intelligence, but that it is not convenient to us to transcribe from religious newspapers, articles that have been first communicated to them. It is necessary to the variety and interest of our periodical that it should have early and original information. We do our best to supply our readers with such denominational intelligence, and we cannot but think that we are not unreasonable in expecting that our brethren throughout the empire should assist us in recording those facts which will supply the materials for the future history of our churches. If it be too much trouble to write out a *second* statement of any transaction, our brethren must choose whether the article shall have prompt publication in the necessarily ephemeral columns of a newspaper, or find a more permanent record amongst the transactions of our body in the pages of this Magazine.

ERRATA.—In our last number, page 555, line 24, was a grievous mistake, not of the printer, but of the writer; who intreats the reader to insert the important word omitted, that the clause may be read, as it was intended, "not one of the Oxford Tract sect."

p. 531, l. 6, for "assignation," read designation.

— l. 23, blot out "not."

p. 532, l. 2, blot out "of."

p. 533, l. 14, for "ministers," read its ministers.

— l. 25, for "religion," read the religion.

p. 537, l. 29, blot out "such."